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THROUGH FANTEELAND TO COOMASSIE.

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A DIARY OF THE ASHANTEE EXPEDITION.

BY

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'CAMP NOTES,' 'TO THE CAPE FOR DIAMONDS,' 'A RIDE ACROSS A CONTINENT,' 'ADVENTURES IN BORNEO,' ETC. ETC.

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PREFACE.

This book pretends to be no history of the late war. To professional hands, and to hands granted more leisure, it should naturally fall to tell the operations, and to reveal the difficulties, which enhance the credit of victory. My work is offered to that larger class of readers to whom technical reports are of less utility than a view of the circumstances in which their countrymen were placed, of the daily life they led, and of the "seamy side" of our campaign. For the sake of these I have transcribed my diary, even in its details; for I am very well assured that the more closely and intimately the English people become acquainted with the Gold Coast, the better will they see what kind of arguments are those which would persuade us to retain a footing there.

It will be seen that I have corrected few errors of opinion, or even of prophecy. It seemed a better and a truer course, for the purpose I had in view, to let the

reader see how things looked to us at the time, and what conclusions we drew from the events before our eyes. Errors in matters of fact, when they occur in my diary, I have corrected either in the text or in a foot note.

If anywhere, in this work or in my published letters, I have offended the feelings of a single officer of the expedition, I beg of him to believe that it is done unwittingly. A wilful hurt would be the most ungrateful return for unvaried courtesy on the part of all with whom I was brought into contact.

It remains for me only to render thanks to the proprietors of the 'Daily Telegraph,' who have kindly allowed me to incorporate in my story such parts of my letters to them as seemed appropriate.

FREDERICK BOYLE.

118, *New Bond Street*,
May 8th, 1874.

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THROUGH FANTEELAND TO COOMASSIE.

CHAPTER I.

AT THE WHITE MAN'S GRAVE.

Sierra Leone—Street Scenes—Moslem Negroes—Opinions of Bishop Cheetham on the War—Government House—Captive Kings at School—Mr. Africanus Horton—His Reminiscences of the War of 1863–64—Our Kossu Volunteers, their Manners, Customs, and Fetishes—Grand Sestros—Boarded by Kroomen—Character of this People—Formation of a Common Tongue by Kroomen and Sailors—Eccentricities of this new Speech.

S. S. Liberia, off Sierra Leone,
October 21st, 1873.

After a voyage as pleasant as ever good ship made, when commanded by good officers, and favoured by good weather, we have reached this lovely port. "The white man's grave" it has been called, and too many mourners at home forbid me to challenge the accusation. But what a charm-

THE GOLD COAST
AND
ASHANTI
SHEWING THE ROUTE TO COOMASSIE
MASSY
GAMAN
HUN
JA
ASHANTI
AMINA
QUAHOU
EWEAWO
AKUAPEM
AKIM
DENKERA
TUFEL
ASSIN
ADANME
WASSAW
PRO
Kumasi
Dunkwa
Prempeh
Coomassie
Cape Coast Castle
Akroful
Abrah
Gomah
Esuah
Tantum
Mampon
Adamfi
Akrobo
Yomoho
Akyem
Akwapim
Fetish worship the chief Object of the Bush Language
Nautical Miles
English Statute Miles

ing spot, and how charming, on this day at least, the climate! It is an old belief that consumption selects the loveliest of womankind, the gentlest and best-loved, to make its victims. Even so the fever which decimates the population of this shore appears to choose the fairest scenes to dwell in. Where distant mountains rise most purple, where smooth seas creep without a ripple to the sand, where green is greenest and vegetation most diversified, where grass is like an emerald and flowers blow free, there look for clustering graves, and listen always for the knell. There's not a scene to which wide travel has introduced me more soft, more pleasing than the view of Sierra Leone from the barracks.

The town does not lie flat, though it clusters along the shore. Wide creeks, or broken river-dells, divide it. The palm-thatched huts, which shelter its fourteen thousand souls, have tones of softest brown. Between their lines are grassy tracks, scarred with red sand, twelve yards in width. The huts stand accurate in rows, but behind each is a little orchard, bright with banana-trees, olive with mangos, shadowed by great tamarinds and cocoa-palms and cotton-trees and bread fruit. The principal streets are avenues bordered by large-leaved trees. In the narrower ways a ceaseless crowd of people comes and goes, brilliant of colour, noisy, laughing, chaffering, eager, each soul, to make itself admired, or, at least, conspicuous. Small open shops, without visible door or shutter, line the street. On the

rail of them are displayed the handkerchiefs of silk and cotton, gaudy always, the dress stuffs, the rubbishing bright ornaments, and all the showy trash by which the guileless Ethiopian is ensnared. Along the roadway before these sheds a line of women squat, with little open baskets of dried fish before their knees, or heaps of fruit and vegetables. As in the West Indies, so here, every soul puts up something to trade, and all the same articles, and yet the little world exists, not too miserably. How it can be so I have often wondered, for the eternal laws of nature seem to be against the possibility. Perhaps as all the stock-in-trade of these small merchants consists of eatables, they each consume their own supply at nightfall, and so creep on through life, profitless and purposeless, but unalterably merry.

I am pleased to find that the native taste of these black people has successfully resisted the attempt to clothe them in European fashion. No object is more ludicrous to view than a negro gorgeously attired in our dress, and none more hideous than a black woman in bonnet and gown. Decency is attended to in Sierra Leone, but it is possible to fulfil all the requirements of modesty without induing one article of our wardrobe. A loose gown reaching to the knees, a brilliant handkerchief round head and waist, a string or two of beads, and a few ornaments to tinkle and flutter, make up a costume for both man and woman most picturesque and useful. Amongst groups thus attired, the jacket and trousers, the tight frock, the hat and bonnet of Europe—all most infamously dirty—

call attention for the prize of supreme ugliness. But other fashions are seen in Sierra Leone. Stalking like a Bedouin through the crowd, with scornful mien and scowl upon his face, passes a tall Mandingo, in long blue robe, wide sleeves, tight sash, *tarboosh,* and rattling charms on every limb. No need to ask the faith he boasts. In every country of the Eastern world you will recognize that swaggering gait and scowling eye. A Moslem indeed is the Mandingo, of whose tribe there are some thousands here, dwelling by themselves on the far side of a ravine, where washerwomen cluster, and dance and sing with most improper gestures, amongst the pebbles at the bottom. A lovely ravine is that, lined with soft ferns, and creeping plants of fleshy leaf, and golden-flowering cassia. Great cocoa palms spring from its sides; their polished grass-green leaves glitter against the olive background of the mangos, and the rough fingers of the bread-fruit. I met an Arab also, in robes of silk and woven gold. He carried a little spear, adorned with fluttering tufts of silk; behind him stalked a half-score of Mandingos, sullenly respectful to a white face when consecrated by the faith of Islam. But I would not be unjust to these black Mahomedans. By all accounts they confine their fanaticism to mere looks, and are as quiet and peaceful, when left alone, as good citizens should be. It is impossible to avoid comparison of them with the Christian negro, and, in appearance, they undoubtedly are superior.

I was most anxious to learn tidings of the German mis-

sionaries, now so long prisoners in Coomassie, and, with that object, I paid my first visit to the Bishop. In the course of breakfast, I had much pleasant conversation with his lordship, who, however, could give little news about the war. He appeared to think that the project of a Fantee confederation on the Gold Coast had been injudiciously treated by our authorities, conceiving that it might have proved of no small service in this attack of the Ashantees, had it been carried out. But the vacillation of our conduct had spoiled the maturing scheme. After the arbitrary repression of Mr. Salmon, who summarily sent the chief promoters to prison for conspiracy, came the system of Mr. Pope Hennessy, who encouraged the Fantee chiefs so far that they actually demanded a large sum of money for the purposes of the federation. This was of course refused, and the project fell through, of which the consequence was that the Ashantees descending found their enemies, as of old, a mere disunited group of villages and tribes. I asked Dr. Cheetham whether he feared, as do some, that the ultimate result of this war might be the withdrawal of England from West Africa. He replied that the thought had not occurred to him. I asked what had been the loss of life in Sierra Leone during the epidemic of this year? He believed it to have been sixteen in a population of about one hundred white persons; this, however, was amongst the *residents* only; on ship-board there had been a great mortality. This year has been exceptional all along the coast. I observed that, as it was stated to me, the merchants of those rivers not under

English protection, excepting such as the Consul and cruising men-of-war can give, did not at all desire to be brought under authority ; that they found the laws of human nature, self-interest, common sense, and mutual jealousy, quite sufficient to secure their safety and their interests; that such troubles as these of the Ashantee and Fantee quarrel could not affect England, were she untrammelled by any protectorate. The bishop replied that he was not able to discuss this matter from purely interested views. He conceived that England and America had been gifted by providence with great qualities and great opportunities, for a special purpose—the benefit of the human race. And, from a higher motive than commercial interests, he should protest against the withdrawal of England from the prosecution of her duty. I inquired whether there was danger to the people of Sierra Leone, mostly Christian, and partially civilised, from any pagan race of conquerors like the Ashantees. He replied that he did not much fear invasion. Was it, then, that the proselytes we had obtained at such an awful expenditure of life, and such a vast cost of money, could not be trusted to retain their faith if left to their own government? He answered that the experiment would not be justifiable. In regard to the missionaries of Coomassie, I learned that they had lately been allowed partial liberty, with the permission to preach. They are both German Protestants, and are married. There is also a Frenchman confined with them, of whom no tidings have been heard these many months.

From the bishop's pleasant dwelling, embosomed in fine trees, where one hears always the wash of waves upon the cliff below, I walked through green lanes and grass-grown streets, to Government House. In the sun it was terribly hot, but a fresh breeze cooled the hill where Mr. Berkeley has his residence. This is a handsome building, very large and airy inside, with verandahs and bow windows, which make it quite picturesque. His Excellency has no better information than other people here, and, as is natural, he has much less of it. By the last mail not a line had reached him. He was disinclined to believe the alarming rumours of an Ashantee advance, which are circulating with full credit in the town. Learning that I wished to see the King of Elmina, kept prisoner here, he most kindly sent a servant with me to his residence, in the house of the Government interpreter, Mr. Lawson. I found the advantage of this courtesy on arrival, for the King is most properly forbidden to hold converse with any one who could give him news from the Gold Coast.

Mr. Lawson's is a small, two-storied house, approached, like most others of its class, through a high, stuccoed arch-way. In the little courtyard within, a dozen natives lounged or stood. On every step of the narrow wooden staircase, which leads, from the outside, to the upper floor, squatted one or two more. On the little landing, and, apparently, to guard the interior, were half-a-dozen, all tall fellows, clad in long blue gowns. I understood that these were retainers and gossips of the captive king. Mr. Lawson did not chance to

be at home, but I was received by a courteous assistant, black of course, who informed me of the rules to be observed in addressing his prisoner. The house in which our regal prisoner is confined, has three tiny reception rooms on the first floor, all stuffed with stuffy furniture. I found an arm chair, broken in the springs, chintz-covered, in the window place of the second cupboard. A moment after entered the king, a superb savage. He wore no ornaments. His dress consisted of a snowy cotton cloth, falling in stately folds from shoulder to ankle. Finer specimen of the human animal I never saw. His height is unusual, and his port most majestic. In age I should take him to be thirty years or so. Black as black can be, is the King of Elmina, with large, resolute eyes, and glistening teeth. Uncovering one ebon shoulder, he shook hands, and sat in a low chair over against me. "Why are you here?" I asked, by way of opening the conversation. "Me no sabey!" he replied, with an angry flash of eyes and teeth. "Same he always say," observes our quiet interpreter, who stands between, a living link of communication; for, so small is the stuffy room, the interpreter's limbs, on either side, touch the king and me. "He doesn't know what he has done?" I ask. "No," exclaims the prisoner, "no man tell me. Black man ask bad man true what they say! English man no ask *me*. I no sabey what I done—no sabey why take me away from my people!" "Who accused you?" I continue; but the interpreter's services are necessary for this long word. "He say men talked behind his back to

Col. Harley, at Cape Coast, and then the soldiers came and took him away from his town and people.—That all!" "What men — black or white?" "Black," answers the interpreter, and "Black—black!" exclaims the king, with such suppressed fury in his expressive face, that I felt a sincere pity for those enemies of his, supposing his savage majesty should get loose. Such a fierce, clever, cruel, face he has, and such a supple, leopard-like body, Col. Harley would need no better justification of the arrest than just a glance of the prisoner.

From the accounts we have at this place, Sir Garnet Wolseley's recruiting has been most unfortunate hitherto. On the Gambia, he has not been able to raise one man. Lieut. Gordon, of the 93rd Highlanders, has been disappointed in getting but a hundred and fifty volunteers amongst the Kossus—I do not guarantee the spelling—of Waterloo, about twenty-five miles from this place, up the river. We are to have the pleasure of taking aboard eighty of these wild fellows. The folks of Sierra Leone will be sincerely glad to be rid of them, for they have been making the tropic night unbearable with dances in the street, and yells, and songs, and tummy-tumming. I must do our allies the justice to say that no worse charge is brought against them, and they are believed to be good fighting material, but very, very wild. Of the recruiting amongst the Houssas we have no news. Sierra Leone itself has contributed near five hundred men, mostly volunteers for the transport service. Of fighting men

something between one and two hundred, from whom, indeed, no great feats of bravery are expected. The head of the "Sailors' Mission" has just informed me that all the rowdies and objectionable people of the town have gone to Cape Coast. The impression is prevalent in this place, that Sir Garnet has not, nor can reasonably expect, more than 2,000 men to repel the new invasion, excluding his white troops, and including the West Indian regiment. Sierra Leone has but half a company of black soldiers, with one officer.

In the fine barracks, situated above the town, where these fifty men dwell, are kept the few prisoners whom we have hitherto captured. The people of the town call them Ashantees, but they lay no claim to that proud title. I find them to be Secundee men,—mere rebels. The King of Elmina never took the oath of allegiance, and he refuses to do so now. The King of Secundee did so, and then began fighting. Negroes of a low type are these prisoners, short of stature, with stupid and repulsive features. Amongst the seven when I visited them, was the king Maki. A contrast was he to the savage monarch of Elmina! I saw on this occasion a little grizzled fellow, with a stubbly white beard. His prison home is with a fellow "king" in a hut up the mountain. This little decrepit sovereign is learning to read and write, together with his martial subjects, under tuition of a tiny negro boy, armed with those dreadful implements, as it must seem to these poor

savages, a square of slate and a pencil. Most amusing it was to see the child's impatience of our interruption of the studies. He was rather a pretty boy, very bright-eyed, and with a skin like satin. As we left, he tapped his slate imperiously, and the grey-bearded pupils slipped their clothes over the shoulder—uncovered for respect to us, as their custom is—and settled down to the childish task.

S. S. Liberia, off Monrovia,
October 24th, 1873.

In Sierra Leone I was so fortunate as to make acquaintance with Mr. Africanus Horton, one of the surviving officers who took part in the Ashanti expedition of 1864. Now, when the attention of all England is fixed upon this coast, it is needless to remind any reader that the expedition of 1864 never fulfilled the object for which it was sent. But the party which Mr. Horton accompanied travelled a great way along the route we have to take, and his reminiscences have considerable interest on that account. The causes of the former war are as mysterious or as simple as that of to-day. The King of Ashantee complained of broken treaties, of slaves detained, of promises unfulfilled, just as now; perhaps in both cases it was merely a savage restlessness which set his hordes in motion. His exclusion from the seaboard, and from first-hand dealing with the traders is, I am sure, the merest pretext. But the Kings of Ashantee are, by tradition, temperament, and necessity, fighting monarchs; and it

may well be that we only waste time in speculating as to their motives. In 1863 the then king descended simultaneously upon our settlements, and those of the Dutch. The Ashantee march, however, was considerably to the eastward of their present line. Advancing from Coomassie, they crossed the Boosum Prah at Ayudi, and thence descended in two columns, the one easterly by Swaidroo, the other due south. They met at Essicoomah, where the Fantees had assembled, and where they met with some resistance. The Ashantees resorted to their usual strategy, outflanked, and defeated their foes. The Fantees rallied at Bobbiscoomah, whither the pursuers followed them, and were again victorious. After this there was no more resistance, and the Ashantee king harried the entire country east of the Arinissa river, as far as the frontier of his allies, the Akuapim. Colonel Conran meanwhile arrived at Cape Coast Castle with the 4th West India regiment. Preparations occupied him from July to December, 1863. On the 5th of that month he started from the *depôt* at Mansu, with all the 4th regiment, W. I., detachments of the 2nd and 3rd, and a number of volunteers from the Gold Coast Artillery; in all about 1600 men. The Ashantees had not thought it needful to await his advance; loaded with spoil and prisoners they had long since withdrawn to their own country, or, at least, had retired from his line of march. Without any semblance of opposition the little force advanced to Prahsu, the crossing place of the Prah river. Thither, after some delay, Colonel Conran proceeded, looked

around, reconnoitred the woods and swamps, found no Ashantees, and retired to Cape Coast, after ten days' stay with his devoted army. The miseries that ensued have left a vivid impression on Mr. Horton. The camp was fearfully unhealthy, even for this pestilential climate. The river overflowed. The rainy season came on. The soldiers, who had started full of spirit for the sack of Coomassie, sickened under their inaction. Out of two hundred men in Mr. Horton's personal charge, one hundred and one were helpless at the same time. The loss of life he describes as awful. Not till June of 1864 was the camp broken up, and in all those months no Ashantee had shown himself.

After this slight sketch of an ill-devised, ill-executed war, I obtained from my informant many details about the country, not uninteresting to record. I should mention by the bye, that Mr. Horton has not yet been presented to Sir Garnet Wolseley, being invalided just before his Excellency's arrival, but he returns to the Gold Coast on the 12th of next month. Sir Garnet, however, has his sketches and charts of the route to Prahsu, and they should be very serviceable. I inquired first about the ethnology of the Coast, and learned that the Ashantees and Fantees are of kindred blood. An Ashantee, though the languages are not identical, can easily understand a Fantee. There is a great difference in accent. It is within historical memory that the power of our foes has been established, from a small beginning. How far to the interior, and on either hand, that power extends no one has the

means of judging. On the south-east its boundary is known, but even those independent tribes which march along its frontier are closely allied with the Ashantee king. Mr. Horton has no doubt at all that he can call 100,000 men to the field, but a very large proportion of them would be indifferently armed. Twenty thousand, those dwelling round Coomassie, might have trade guns and machetes; twenty thousand more might have machetes and no guns; the remainder would, probably, prove to be mere naked savages from the interior, bearing only bows and native weapons. I learn that the Ashantee is not a tall man, but, on the contrary, shorter than the tribes of the coast, who are, mostly, of superb proportions. He is lean and wiry, but distinguished for courage. The king and the superior chiefs are notably distinct from the rank and file. They have tall and brawny figures, skins fair by comparison, and a look strikingly martial. It is fear of his own chieftain that makes the Ashantee so terrible to the enemy. As well die by the sword in front as the sword behind, is a saying amongst them. The Fantees, indeed, have never been able to make a fight when engaged face to face, and they are not able to resist the inevitable movement towards their flank and rear. Thus, in the present war, they lost the battle of Yan-Coomassie, defeated in the moment of victory. By the bye, I should mention, for the guidance of those who are studying the map, that there are three Coomassies on our probable line of march, all marked on the chart; to wit, a small Fantee village about twenty miles north of Cape

Coast Castle, Yan-Coomassie ten miles further, and Coomassie the Golden, about 170 miles inland. Mr. Horton informs me that our government maps are incorrect as to distances. By the report of traders the march from Prahsu to the Ashantee capital is longer than from the Castle to Prahsu, though represented to us as considerably shorter.

I asked about the nature of the country to be traversed, and learned that from the coast as far as Dunquah, where the Fantees are reassembling, it is tolerably open. Thence to Prahsu dense bush ensues; and bush almost more dense from the river to within fifteen miles of Coomassie. The capital stands in the midst of plantations and open ground. My informant, in the course of many years service on the coast as Medical Officer and Commandant of Secundee, has conversed with hundreds of Ashantees; and I enquired from him what was his opinion about the town. He replied that Coomassie was, beyond a question, very much richer than other native towns of this coast. The Ashantees do not dig gold themselves, nor will they even pick up dust or coins that fall by accident, believing that such are jealously appropriated by the ground-fetish; but they have no scruple in making slaves work for them. The population, however, Mr. Horton estimates at a bare 15,000 souls. At most times of the year there are one or more great chiefs attending the king, whose retinues swell the town folk by five, or even ten, thousand, but the resident population is exceeded by many native settlements by no means so important or pretentious. I inquired

about that stone palace described by Bowditch, the object of so much derision amongst merchants and traders of this coast. I am informed that the stone palace, with its courtyards, walls, etc., is a great fact. Early in this century the Ashantees penetrated to the sea, and took the town of Cormantine, where the only masons of this shore dwell in the neighbourhood of their quarries. The king carried off all these artificers, with a sufficient supply of hewn stone to build his much be-ridiculed palace. And there it stands to this day, but considerably dilapidated.

We are carrying with us seventy-nine recruits for Sir G. Wolseley, the collection of Mr. Gordon, 93rd Highlanders. The most of them are Kossus, from the neighbourhood of Waterloo, on the Sierra Leone river. Less promising material was never seen. They are mere savages, but appear to possess but a small proportion of the savage virtue—bravery; appear, I say, for one is often deceived in this matter. They have two chiefs, one elderly, dressed in an old blue gown, and one who bears the insignia of command in shape of a ju-ju helmet. Such a wonderful piece of furniture is this! Its framework is wicker, covered with bullock hide, hair outwards. Four little sheep's horns are fixed therein, bands of stamped leather encircle it, and charms dangle from the crown. It has two long lappets depending, also of stamped leather, but prettily embroidered with cowrie shells. The shape is that of a chimney pot, the height eighteen inches, and the smell deadly. This chief commands the Sierra

Leone detachment, the English-speaking, civilized (!), school-taught recruits. It is amongst these we find the fire-eaters, the war-dancers, the screamers at midnight, the tum-tummers, the sword-practisers, the plagues of the vessel. What a lot of Ashantee heads they will cut off, to be sure, if only all promises are kept! But our sailors forward loudly profess their willingness to eat every decapitated foe. A vessel laden like ours never yet sailed the sea, I should think. Besides the seventy-nine warriors, we are carrying forty bullocks on deck, and no man knows how many barrels of provisions for the force. Add to these thirty-five Kroo boys, engaged, as is usual, to relieve the white sailors in this hot climate. At Grand Sestros, without discharging a single soul, we expect to take aboard at least fifty more Kroomen. There will not, in sober fact, be room for the crowd to stand even, when our tale is complete. The forecastle is a steaming mass of black flesh already. Most creditable is it to the officers appointed by the British and African S. S. Company that with such an unusual cargo, there should have been not one disturbance, except a trifling affray on the first night, when the blacks had not yet slept off their liquor. More than that, there are no complaints on any hand, barring a good-natured grumble from the crew. It is not, fortunately, an English practice to give a man praise for doing his duty, but I should not be doing mine if I failed to notice the excellent management, tact, and temper of Captain Lowrie and all his officers under most trying circumstances. Though,

as I have said, it is scarce possible to move forward of the funnel—though no anticipation of the inroad could be formed twenty hours before, though no preparations were possible, and the amount of stores to be carried could not be foreseen —not only does the voyage proceed as comfortably as before, but not even one word of ill temper has been uttered. Our captain's pleasant laugh is as ready, our purser serves the frequent meal as abundant and as punctual as if the sailors had an empty deck to do their duty in, and the cook had not an hundred extra mouths to feed. Seeing what we passengers see, it does not at all surprise us to be told that the 'Liberia' will find freight where other ships go empty away, and that merchants homeward bound will subordinate their business arrangements to the desire of returning with Captain Lowrie. All down the coast, through all classes, governors and bishops, merchants and missionaries, the very negroes and Kroomen, there will be sincere regret to hear that this is our captain's last voyage. After fifteen years of most popular and successful command he retires to well-earned repose.

Grand Sestros, Oct. 26th.

Now, of a verity, the savages have gat hold upon us! They are swarming aboard by hundreds, their canoes jostle and interlock against our iron sides. The air is full of cries and curses such as need no interpreter. The grey-blue sea, all glittering in heat, which bodily seems to move in one great sigh of swell, is flecked with narrow dug-outs, each containing

four or six men, who paddle as for life. Under our side the struggle is desperate. No ladder is lowered to these visitors. By a single rope flung over the lofty side they clamber up like bees a-swarming. The crush is wild enough to cause alarm. From canoes firm wedged six or ten deep by our side, brawny naked fellows are climbing, each others limbs and heads their foothold. The frail canoes rock and fill. The paddlers fiercely cry and glapper. In the back of each is the prow of an intruding craft, pushing him from his seat. Men standing up are locked in each others arms. Ropes' ends are freely dealt upon the climbers, by impatient hands below. Just such a scene we have read of when some good ship stranded has been attacked by savage hordes all bent on plunder and blood. But here there is no alarm. Our ship's company leans over the side, and laughs at this, the great sensation of the voyage. The sailors recognise old ship mates, and greet "Peasoup," or "Teakettle," or "Nigger Tom," with uproarious welcome. Peasoup and Nigger Tom respond with a hurried grin, as they mount, all perspiring, the bulwark, and spring down. This is no invasion. The black line down the nose, the filed front teeth, proclaim the Krooman. Ay, and more signs also has he to distinguish himself—the member of this single tribe of *workers*, solitary on the coast. He can show brawny arms, deep chest, and mighty bulk, such as no other race can rival. An honest face too, such as is the honesty of his colour, and frank, pleasant eyes. Grand Sestros is, in short, the chief recruiting place for these good fellows,

and we are here filling up not our own wants only; our purser holds commissions for more than fifty men from different merchants along the coast.

Amusing little pictures are to be seen about the deck when all the Kroomen have come on board. Here is a chief, magnificent in a stovepipe hat and nothing else, smoking a "long clay" in the Captain's own chair. Then stands "Gray" himself, the brawniest of mortals, with the huge brass medal about his neck which proclaims his services aboard the ship 'Victory of Bristol'; a notable man is Gray, and of him, of his strength and fidelity, we have heard many tales during the voyage. Close by, talking with a merchant, is a short Krooman whose biceps is developed to deformity, and we hear, without astonishment, that he can lift an ordinary human being with one hand. All are stark naked, except for the breech-clout. They wear a few ornaments, beads and copper wire, but the wages of their last voyage have been spent long since, in new wives, in drink, and all manner of "games." They are even thin from want of food, for Captain Lowrie's arrival has been expected some days. The Kroomen live only by work on ship board, and for white masters. Their country is poor, producing no palm oil, no gold, nothing, in fact, but strong arms and willing hands. These are the Krooman's capital, and he does not spare them. But he is most desperately wasteful of the income they bring, and often does he hunger when work is slack and trade bad. But this coast would be even less endurable than it is without the Kroomen.

Here may be observed that process so rare, and so instructive to the philologist—the formation of a language. Visitors and natives, working together, are gradually making out a common lingo, which is scarcely more like English than Chinese "pigeon talk," but which seems destined to be the language of the Coast in no long time. Love of imitation runs strong in the negro breast, and it is especially active in respect of all that belongs to the white man. Already you may hear the Kroomen talking to one another in their new dialect; and the Ashantee war has introduced a score of English idioms into the Fantee, to the utter exclusion of its own corresponding phrases. "Good morning," "How d'you do?" "sick," "well," "fool"—with an emphatic prefix, and many other terms, had become universal before the expedition ended. But it must not be supposed that this *patois* is English. It consists, indeed, of English words, but used in a sense, and in conjunctions, almost unintelligible to us. One might reflect, not without profit perhaps, upon the strange uses to which our mother words are put. As for all effects there is a cause, deep thought might reveal to us why the verb "to be" is persistently ignored in its present and imperfect tenses, and to "live" is substituted. One cannot easily believe that Englishmen knowingly introduced this extraordinary form, or that it came into use by accident. Perhaps the West Coast dialects had the idiom, and translated it literally in their first struggles with the English speech. In that case, the missionaries may be said to have

brought it into use. Or, again, the earliest traders, seeking ivory and oil, unconsciously made it current by asking after elephants and palm-trees. But I am inclined to think that the marvel of our sustained existence on the West Coast lies at the root of this expression—"How, Capt. Lowrie, you live again?" exclaims the Kroo chief as he comes on the quarter-deck. It will be represented to you that the salutation is but equivalent to our English, "You here again?" but I don't accept the explanation. The Krooman never ceases to be astonished at the recurrent appearances of Capt. Lowrie alive and hearty, and his "live," in this and all cases, bears no other interpretation.

The use of "catch" is another puzzle to be unravelled. This verb fills the place of our "get" or "fetch," and "have." It might lead one to suppose these negroes to be mighty huntsmen, or indomitable fishers; but they are nothing of the sort. Does the term come down from slave-dealing times, when indeed the merchandise craved by our traders were literally caught? "One time," which is scarcely English, means "be quick." The new language gives little trouble in its inflexions. But two tenses go to a verb, present and past. No perplexity in numbers or genders embarrasses the Krooman, he knows but the singular and the masculine. The definite article and all demonstrative pronouns are replaced by an universal "them." "Go catch them boy one time," signifies to the initiated, "Fetch that boy of mine, and be quick about it." Thus a language is building itself up.

Wouldn't it have been as cheap and as easy to teach the innocent African plain English? But some men have a marvellous facility in picking up these doggrel dialects, and others have a natural genius for inventing them. One of our fellow-passengers, who had not hitherto shown remarkable quickness, discoursed glibly with all comers in a jargon utterly unintelligible to us, with but two days' practice. It was not for a week after that we discovered his fluent lingo to be pure fancy-talk, no better understood by the Kroomen than by ourselves.

CHAPTER II.

CAPE COAST CASTLE.

Cape Coast Castle—Passing View of a Bombardment—Sir Garnet Wolseley Absent in the Bush—Landing of the Kossus—All the Gods of Africa Mustering against Ashantee—Women Porters—Kossu Demonstration—Cape Coast Castle Traders—Their Former Magnificence—Not Due to Slave Trade—Steady Decline of Commerce—Gold Dust Failing in Supply—Captain Thompson's Report—Our Interference the Cause of Decline—No Attempt to Substitute New Produce for Trade—India-Rubber abounds, and Gum—Ashantee Trade the Reliance of Cape Coast—Views from my Residence—The Family Opposite, their Occupations and Amusements—The Ashantee Cloth Trade—Return of Sir Garnet—Proclamation—The Fight at Dunquah—Sir Garnet's Influence—Appeal to Fantee Courage—The Railway Abandoned—Government House—Spirit of the Women—The Land Steamer in Motion.

Oct. 29th, 1873.

A STEEL-BLUE sea rolling great waves. A narrow boundary of sand, on which the rollers hurl like crested walls of water. A monstrous fort on the beach, all towers, curtains, staircases,

and courtyards. Another, less picturesque, upon a hill—a ruined town, in which red walls hang tottering between heaven and earth, without support, continuation, or purpose apparent; in which gable-ends, with no gable visible, abound; in which whole rows of sashless windows admit the light of heaven from either side indifferently; a town, you would say, which had suffered the last extremities of war, but two or three days ago. Low hills, sad-green of colour, surrounding it. A white house peeping here and there through masses of more showy verdure. Such is one's first view of the spot for ever sanctified to the admirers of L.E.L. Less brilliant than Sierra Leone in point of colour, the picturesque mass of the fort gives Cape Coast Castle an appearance much more imposing than the larger town can boast. It lacks the fine background, the broken shore, the deep red of sandstone, and the marvellous green of foliage, but the castle compensates for every deficiency. I never saw a building of more romantic outline. In the midst is a huge tower, rounded at each corner, on which our flag, happily, still floats. Around it are buildings of every shape and height, walls, and battlements, and turrets. The importance of this place must indeed have been immense in the day of the Portuguese, to induce them to raise such a structure. And it is not only at Cape Coast that European nations have set up these monstrous castles. But nine miles away is Elmina, where the Dutch used to pride themselves upon possessing a rival show. And on the other side, nearer still, is Dix Cove, with Boutry fort,

and several more. But the glory of the builders' day has departed.

Nothing puzzles a distant looker on like a bombardment, if he have no previous information about the circumstances. As we passed Boutry, yesterday, if indeed the place in question was Boutry, a point not so certain as a conscientious correspondent might desire, we saw two men-of-war at anchor, with boats out. It was yet earliest morning, but our sailors had plainly been awake some time. Little balloons of snow expanded over both ships and boats, from time to time, and, as we drew closer, the boom of guns was heard. Passing a headland that hid the cove off which they lay, the shore proved to be concealed in dense brown smoke, on which the white gun-puffs seemed like little balls of cotton wool. The town of Boutry was in a blaze, and even, as it appeared, the conflagration stretched beyond the town to bush or harvest ground. Now and again the morning breeze bored through the smoke, and then, as through a window, we could see the red walls of Boutry fort, overhung with the powder cloud; but whether the fort was bombarded or bombarding, whether it was firing into our ships or aiding them to destroy the town, whether that unfortunate "location" was burned by accident, and all other forms that question could take about the business, remained without an answer, and so remain still. All they know here is that the 'Merlin' and the 'Argus' went down the coast a week since. I am bound also to confess that very little curiosity is felt about their proceedings. Towns bombarded

and burnt have been too commonly reported of late to arouse much attention.

Arriving at Cape Coast Castle about 1.30 P.M. yesterday, I was startled by the news that Sir Garnet Wolseley and all his officers had taken the field on Sunday night. I instantly prepared for a long night's march to Dunquah, where, as I was enabled to tell you in my last letter, the Fantee forces have their rendezvous. From the busy inquiries, and the anxieties, this information caused, I was pleasantly diverted by learning, on unquestionable authority, that the affair impending was a mere foray. Sir Garnet had left word that he would certainly return last night or this morning, and, as the English mail is due to leave to-day, I thought it desirable to write off such news as we have rather than to pursue a force which would probably be returning as I set out. On what information Sir Garnet lays his plans, and what those plans are, none but a very few, if any, are aware. Cape Coast Castle swarms with Ashantee spies—or so it is believed. Our enemies are so intimately acquainted with the town, and so many of them speak Fantee without a trace of accent, that they could, perhaps they do, walk into the streets and look about them, and converse, without danger of detection. With the possibility of such espionage in view, our general is most guarded in his movements. At midday on Sunday last, no one knew of an advance impending, but at 4 P.M. the entire force disposable was on its way to Dunquah. Of

the results of the movement, we have not, even yet, one word of information.

The first thing to do, when once I had satisfied myself that no night march to the front could be advisable, was to observe our Kossu allies, now about to land. They went over the side into large boats, twelve by a company. I observed with great delight that the great Ju-ju drum was sent over by itself with all ceremony. What a collection of miscellaneous savages are we gathering against wretched Ashantee! All the gods of West Africa are invoked to fight him. Allah fights, or is expected to fight, with the Houssas of Addah, and every Ju-ju and fetish, from thence up to the Gambia is called to aid. Our Kossus went ashore very quietly, striking up that war-song we have learnt to know so well, as they vanished behind the long rollers. When the last of them had gone over the side, I bade adieu to the pleasant vessel in which we had voyaged three weeks. The crew of my boat were Fantees. They sat upon the extreme edge of their craft, and dipped their paddles in perfect time, to the most monotonous song ever man sung. It consisted of one line only, to which, incessantly repeated, the paddlers answered in a chorus of two words. Travelling very slowly, now lifted on high, now descending the ocean depths, we made for shore. In a narrow bay between two rocks, we eluded the towering surf, and landed with no worse accident than a sprinkling of spray. It remained to get out the baggage, and I looked with dismay at the crowd of loafing natives, with scroundrelism stamped

upon their countenances, who clustered eagerly to the side. How amongst so many should a man look after his own? Help came from an unexpected quarter. A quiet looking negro, in the picturesque undress of the West Indian regiments, white coat, red cap, and baggy breeches of dark blue, gave a signal with his hand, and fifty female porters came dancing through the crowd. They were all naked to the waist, and from the knee. Every age above childhood had its representatives, from the withered beldame, who had lost all the beauties of sex, to the slender girl who did not yet possess them. A willing, clamourous crew, they siezed my packages, and hoisted them upon their heads. At a smile and a sign, they ranged themselves in row, until the tale of goods to be convoyed was announced complete, and then, with merry laughter they danced off to the shady portal of the fort. Our way hence was stopped by another bevy, returning to the beat of a rhythmic song, with feet deftly changed, and waving of arms and bodies. The expressions of face, and the laughterful, uproarious exchange of scolding, reminded me exactly of scenes beheld when one troop of dancers meets another at the "wing." In a few seconds, the steep, cool arch was clear, and the outgoers were busy as bees around huge packages of rice. We went on into the court. What swiftness of words, what scope of humourous expression, would be needed to describe the scene within! Fancy a vast courtyard, almost triangular in form, overlooked by the big tower, and by staircases and balconies innumerable. Fancy it filled, piled up,

with boxes, packages, and barrels, leaving only a middle passage. People it with a crush of women, amongst whom, like sailors swimming in inky sea, appear a half dozen officers of the commissariat, red with heat, perspiring under their helmets, laughing and scolding in a breath. With no more regard for them than a laugh, and an interpolated word in the endless song, the female porters execute their outward dance, and perform the heavy duties of their returning task.

"Far hae I wandered an' muckle hae I seen,"

as the old song has it, but the like of that courtyard, "never saw I none." Of order or organization there appeared to be no vestige, and yet, looking at that same courtyard to-day, I understand the enthusiasm with which our transport officers regard their female gang. The arrangement, the decency, which had been hopeless to attain with Kroomen, or with the villanous recruits of Sierra Leone, are achieved without difficulty by the women. "Just tip 'em a laugh and a punch in the ribs," said a Scotch serjeant to me to-day, "an' them there Fantee women will carry 200 pounds each from this to Coomassie on their heads!" Their strength is surprising, and their merriment inexhaustible. No work seems to daunt them, if only they get good humoured encouragement from the officers. In physical force, they are more than a match for those they call their lords, and their tractability seems to be beyond proof. The officials declare to me that more work has been done since last Monday, when the *men* of the trans-

port were called to the front, than had been achieved during the previous three weeks.

In the middle of the courtyard, an intermitted scream of laughter rising above the songs, the rhythmic patter of dancing feet, and the cheery sound of women's voices, recalled the presence of our Kossus, who had landed ahead of me. Struggling after my porters, through the steaming crowd, I made for the scene of fun. Fun it was indeed. Our warriors were drunk with excitement, mad with the vanity of "showing off" before so many women. I should be at a loss to imagine any contortion of which human frame is capable, any flourish of sword or practice of jungle-fight, which one or other did not execute. They danced, and they sang, and they screamed, and they foamed, until the officers of the Commissariat, who stood around on rice bales, were sick with laughing, and demanded a cessation. Thereupon, the great Ju-ju chief, accoutred in the helmet I have told you of, mounted in state upon four warriors at once, and marched in triumph from the court, holding his scabbard in left hand, with the sword half drawn in his right. And so they passed away to Prospect Hill; whence, after learning some small rudiments of soldiery, they will be sent to the attack.

I was very notably fortunate in obtaining shelter at the house of Mr. Selby, the representative in Cape Coast of Messrs. Lintott, Spink, and Co. To his genial hospitality I believe myself indebted for that escape from all serious illness which a bare half-dozen could boast out of all the

numbers who served an equal time. It will not be superfluous to say a few words about the firm of Lintott, Spink, and Co., seeing they occupy the second place amongst the three European houses which can and do absorb all the trade of Cape Coast and its adjoining regions. Messrs. Swanzy hold the first rank, and Mr. Kendal, who does business on his own account, the third. Messrs. Lintott, Spink, and Co. are the successors to Messrs. Forster and Smith, traders of the elder and more prosperous day. They had a fleet of seventeen sail always busy. There were great merchants in Africa at that time, men whose wealth and luxury is evidenced by the style of their houses yet remaining. Amidst the dirty ruins of Cape Coast Castle, here and there a great edifice towers, solidly built of stone and rubble—a palace environed by heaps of mud. This was the residence of a trader in old times. Government House, a very large and handsome building, was lately bought from the representatives of Forster and Smith, who had got it by the bankruptcy of its last owner. Gothic House, an enormous edifice, reached their hands in the same way; it is now rented by Government, and accommodates both the post-office and the colonial offices. Another vast building is the Military Hospital. A fourth, Palm House, also in the hands of Mr. Selby, might accommodate half a battalion, officers and all. Mrs. Swanzy lives upon the hill in a house as big as a factory. The judge's bungalow, just outside the town, is spacious enough and graceful enough to be called a residence, with the

large R, by auctioneers; he rents it through Mr. Selby. Others there are which to enumerate would be long. I wish to point out that the trade and civilisation of Cape Coast Castle, and, indeed, of all the Gold Coast, have declined and are declining with great rapidity. Why, the last owner of Gothic House had a picture gallery there, of which the contents, if not exactly what they professed to be, were at least purchased at their value alleged! I doubt if, at this present time, there are six oil paintings in all the town. The houses of which I have spoken were evidently built for large entertainments, and a great "way of life"; but for one person to dine with another is now an event, a landmark in the year. It is true that those who raised these solid barracks, or their descendants, mostly drifted into bankruptcy; but they drifted with the country. Credit in the market is the best test of mercantile prosperity, and be it noted that when Messrs. Forster and Smith retired from business, they left to their successors for collection a sum of debt so vast, that Mr. Selby has still upon his books not less than half a million sterling to recover. They retired because the business could no longer employ their capital with profit, and the great firm boldly resolved to strike in another direction. It was a wise step, justified both ways—by the collapse of trade on the Gold Coast, and by the success of their new venture. I should be sorry to offer my friend Selby five per cent. for the amount due to him. I should fear for his senses under the delightful shock.

It will be said by those who, knowing nothing of the coast, fanatically desire to keep our hold of Africa, that the prosperity of former times was due to the slave-trade. This is not so; neither of the firms which once employed such vast capital here were ever connected with that traffic. They did an honest business in cottons and European manufactures, for oil, ground-nuts, gold dust, and other produce. Why, then, have the profits, and indeed the trade itself, so far declined that merchants scarcely get a living now where once they made rapid fortunes? Be it observed, in the first place, that I speak of the Gold Coast only; the "rivers," after a period of depression, are once more becoming profitable. The introduction of steamers, which carry goods for anybody, if only he can pay the freight, is one great cause of individual loss. Small traders could not get an order executed when the whole business of carrying was in the hands of a powerful rival. But this point, so much insisted on, does not appear to me of value in the respect we are considering. If steamers have worked mischief with the Swanzys, the Forsters, and Smiths, and other leviathans, they have opened up a general trade much larger than the monopoly destroyed. On the Gold Coast, however, business has ceased to pay for no such cause. It has thus ceased because the supply of produce has declined and is declining. The most important commerce of this part was the exchange of English goods against gold dust. That article is not now forthcoming in the necessary quantity. Twenty-five years ago the export was valued at £300,000 per

annum; it is now but ten per cent. of that amount. For some reason or other the yield of gold has diminished to this extent. It is found in several districts. The Wassaw country, lying west of our protectorate, is one great digging. No small quantity came from Appolonia; but the richest beds are found in Ashantee country, where, perhaps, will ultimately be discovered the very grandest *placers*, or washings, in the world. In Fantee territory no gold is found, or very little. Oil and kernels are sometimes shipped, in small quantities, from Winnebah, Pram-pram, Saltpond, and other little ports, but from Cape Coast never. It is evident, therefore, that the Fantee trade was never self-supporting. It depended on the gold fields of Wassaw and Ashantee. The former of these, for reasons unknown, have greatly fallen off in their supply; the latter have been more or less closed to our trade since the first troubles began with Ashantee, in 1807. The late Capt. Thompson, writing to the 'Daily Telegraph,' under date of November 18, 1873, thus describes the Wassaw diggings as he saw them when travelling on a mission to that people:—

Through this country the path was everywhere honeycombed, and so was the surrounding soil, with holes about three feet deep and twelve feet in diameter. These were the native gold mines, not worked now, as all "trade labour" had been stopped by the chiefs, that the "blood labour" might proceed uninterruptedly. As much as five and six ounces are frequently obtained by the women in a day out of one of these gold holes; indeed, the soil is evidently rich in auriferous deposit, which may be seen cropping out of the sides of these shallow diggings. The villages of this country occur at rare

intervals, and are very small, though the inhabitants are often wealthy. The reason is that though there is little to eat there is plenty of gold; and as gold is portable property, easily seized, the villagers are subjected to incessant plunder, under the name of taxation, by their kings, who descend with their warriors as often as convenient upon these gold-diggers, and carry off every particle of the precious metal that has not been buried.

The oppressions mentioned by Captain Thompson may have their weight in discouraging Wassaw diggers, but one cannot believe them more powerful now than in the days before we undertook our ridiculous protectorate. A more important agent in reducing the yield of gold was that protectorate itself. The kings of Wassaw, like the kings of Ashantee now, had once the power to exact a *corvée* from their people—power we have taken from them. They could and did order out thousands of men to dig gold for their profit, which gold their extravagance and savage generosity soon put into circulation. It cannot be too often reiterated—for the English mind is slow to believe such a fact—that the negro is not to be induced to continuous work by any temptation. He must be *made*, either by necessity or by direct compulsion. Our absurd protectorate has withdrawn from the Wassaw kings their absolute authority, and the return of gold has suffered in proportion. And at the same time, that copious supply once reaching us from Ashantee has become fitful and uncertain.

The Fantees, squatted each on his own corn patch, under the shade of his own banana, do not attempt to substitute any produce for that lost harvest. Their country abounds with india-

rubber. Every village has from five to twenty trees planted in it, for the sole purpose of giving shade. Specimens of the finest gums I ever saw may be admired in merchants' houses. What other products of value his forests contain no one can say; but the india-rubber is astonishingly plentiful. It is not of the finest class, I believe, neither equal to the American nor to that liana-rubber found in the Gaboon regions, but it has considerable value. Never a tree has been tapped on the coast, never an effort has been made to establish a self-subsisting commerce. Ill feeling between Fantee and Ashantee means stagnation of trade and heavy loss to the merchant; hostilities mean ruin and despair. Whilst Ashantee was our friend, great fortunes were made on the Gold Coast, great houses built, general prosperity; Ashantee our foe, the wretched Fantee finds his level, trade stands still, merchants break or retire. Ashantee prostrate is a new idea. None can foresee the result of that factor. But the desperate folly which produced this war has never been equalled since the farmer of old ripped up his goose to snatch her golden eggs.

My new residence is a corner house, solidly and handsomely built of rubble. The ground floor makes a vault-like warehouse, in which is stored that miscellaneous collection of European goods necessary for African trade. Negroes don't understand a speciality; the merchant must deal in everything or in nothing. Under broad pillars, which support the upper floors, between great casks of rum, old go-carts, and dilapi-

dated man-carriages, is a wide flight of steps that mounts to the living-rooms. The first floor contains a very lofty and spacious drawing-room, a dining-room of most hospitable proportions, with a small *salon* beyond, and various bed-rooms. Along the sea-front of the dining-room and *salon* extends a wide and airy verandah, most convenient for him who would observe the passing show of Cape Coast life. The upper floor, kindly resigned to me by Mr. Selby, has two very large apartments open to the roof, and a little writing-room between. Here there is perpetual wind, however sultry be the streets. Between roof and wall two feet of lattice work has been built in, with the happiest result. Writing with the jalousies closed, I have to weight each sheet of paper, or it would fly away. Outside, the flat lower roofs make a most pleasant promenade at early morning or late eve. Most decidedly these old merchants knew how to build, but their great rooms are dull enough now that gaiety has vanished with waning gold.

From the verandah one beheld droll sights. Opposite stands the big mud-house of a chief, filthy, frowsy, and ruinous, but always lively. I have no idea at all how many wives dwelt therein, or how many children and slaves, but the house was a very hive, an *officina gentium*, and the inhabitants all pursued their life in the open air. A ragged palm-tree stood before the door, under which they pretended to find shade. Here were always squatted five-and-twenty individuals, intensely engaged in watching five-and-twenty more,

who mashed corn, or boiled palm soup, or rolled out *kenki*, while the remaining twenty-five hung about the road and reviled the passers-by. That is to say, that their language sounded like reviling, but it may have been blessing in disguise. Supernumeraries, to the amount of a hundred or so, surveyed the family from aloft, leaning on broken window-sills of mud, or languidly swinging, heads and legs in a heap, upon a frowsy old hammock inside the cock-loft. This multitude was all female or infant, and all provided with the necklace of white beads which shows that the house-husband is serving his country. How it—the multitude—exists is an old, old question. I fancy something rather important was transacted in the dog-trade. Pet dogs of the female sex are quite self-supporting at Cape Coast. So are rats. Our neighbours' dogs were numerous, and the pups uncommonly fat. These were watched with great vigilance, and promptly brought back when straying beyond sight. And the stark little youngsters of ten or twelve years old, who abounded, doubtless had considerable gifts for the chase. The favourite game of Cape Coast is the snail. This creature is there found of abnormal size, and of a sliminess beyond the common. Stewed with the dogs and rats aforesaid, it makes a soup with which I should not think of comparing turtle. And one cannot believe that any large proportion of the *kenki*, corn, *foo-foo*, and palm soup which we saw in perpetual course of preparation was consumed by the family; because farinaceous food is fattening, and this family was lean beyond

belief. A lady in Europe may pass herself off as moderately plump, though a living skeleton, but the simplicity of Fantee attire makes deception impossible. It consists of a single cloth, tightly girt over the hips, and so arranged that in cold weather two or three of the upper folds may be drawn up under the arm-pits. Married women are supposed always to keep these folds extended, thus hiding the bosom. I wish they were more strict in complying with etiquette; for the horrors revealed by neglect of it are painful to the last degree. Young girls only cover the bust when cold, and it must be owned that prettier figures, so far as this point goes, could nowhere be found. I believe that an under-cloth is worn, but it is so small as never to show. Attached thereto behind and under the upper garment is the *kinki*, or "bustle," a roll of cloth varying in size according to the age and rank of the wearer. The wife of a chieftain or rich man carries a square *kinki* at least twelve inches wide, which gives a ridiculous breadth to the person. You would suppose that the lady had been victim of that old trick, prepared with cobbler's wax and a stool, and that she was waddling off to the doctor, carrying her seat behind. It is alleged that the *kinki* is worn for the convenience of carrying children, and no doubt it serves that purpose. But I take it that the Fantee women are instinctively conscious of the weak point in their figure. Africa shows us the two extremes of woman's anatomy in this respect:—the Hottentot Venus at one end and the Fantee *androgyne* at the other.

In the horrid dulness of life at Cape Coast Castle, during the intervals of my expeditions, this opposite household was a great resource. I never ceased to marvel at the contented idleness of the inmates. It was a wonder. One found a day's hard work in combing out another's wool, and the other found a day of heaven's delight in undergoing the operation. I had no notion what a length the negro hair will grow. Several of these women could have theirs combed out a foot all round, standing straight on end at that length. One or two reached eighteen inches. Most fantastic are the *coiffures* of the Fantee. As their stiff wool will part anywhere, and stand in any shape to which it may be twisted, exhaustion of the fancy is the only limit that can be placed to the hair-dresser's art. The commonest and simplest fashion is that of a cushion, made by combing up all the outside hair, and bending it inwards, whilst the centre kinks are twisted into a spike, and whipped about with thread. In another fashion all the hair is thus spiked up, leaving but the roll outside. A third, very elaborate, is contrived by parting the head all over in larger or smaller diamonds; the wool in each diamond is then twisted together in a little spike at the centre, making an exact resemblance to a pine-apple. When neatly dressed, and decked with the pins, the combs, and the golden butterflies, in which Fantee jewellers show some skill, the head of a Cape Coast woman is not ungraceful. She has no point of beauty in feature, but the expression is amiable, and it is rarely one sees the worst peculiarities of the negro face.

Both men and women have an excellent taste in colour. No glaring tone will succeed in the Coast trade, nor any extravagant size or showiness in ornament. Some of the prettiest though cheapest cloths I noticed had been made by sewing together patches and scraps of English cottons, and the effect of these was always good. Those patterns which may be described as "rich but not gaudy," are the favourites. Cloths of their own manufacture, or of Ashantee, are much more prized. The dyes come from England, and the cotton also sometimes, but more frequently the latter is home grown. Native looms will not weave a greater breadth than four inches, and the long strips must be sewn together. Even cottons of the usual size will fetch fifteen shillings, whilst those on which extra care has been bestowed reach three and four pounds. Native silks attain an extraordinary price, beyond the reach of any but the wealthiest.

This commerce is in its infancy. Twelve years ago the Ashantees first began to trade in their cloths, but the finest come, through their hands, from unknown tribes of the interior. The introduction of these is later still, and they yet command the extravagant price of a novelty. Some favourite cloths come from Lagos, which are known by their peculiar patterns. The dyers make up a knot or bunch of the material, and dip it in indigo, which process, of course, has the effect of forming an irregular rosette of colour. Fair imitations are manufactured at Accra, but the dye is very inferior. I should conceive that Manchester could easily

compete in this article, although the vast superiority of native work, in point of durability, is beyond our competition.

Oct. 30th. The prudence of my course in waiting Sir Garnet Wolseley's return is justified by the event. He came back last night, rather footsore, but without any tale of adventure. The late expedition was a demonstration and nothing more. Our General's policy is not difficult to divine. He came here a month ago to find the Ashantees absolutely master of the coast. Their camp at Moumpon, containing not less, as I can assure you, than 40,000 warriors, lay a bare eight miles from the castle. At Napoleon redoubt, an outwork five miles away, the Ashantee war-drums could be heard. Sir Garnet's first policy was to break up that threatening camp. So long as the enemy remained in force at Moumpon, the fidelity of the coast clans could not be depended on. Their safety demanded from them assistance to the Ashantees. Sir Garnet, therefore, marched out on the 21st inst.; and, after a brisk engagement in the neighbourhood of Elmina, he defeated the enemy on their own ground, and burnt the allied villages Ampenee and Akimfoo. The following notice, which has been circulated in every direction, records his success :—

"To all the tribes and people of the Gold Coast.

"Know ye that certain chiefs have harboured Ashantees and other enemies of the tribes in alliance with her Majesty, and have supplied them with munition of war and other stores, whereupon I duly summoned them to appear before me. They neglected to attend my summons—they consulted with the Ashantee enemy now at Mampon. On Tuesday last I moved from

here upon them, and pursued them. They fancied they could meet me in the bush. In the bush they were beaten and destroyed. Essaman, Anquana, Akimfoo, and Ampenee are now charred ruins. I, therefore, being unwilling that any tribe should be exposed to a like fate from ignorance of my power to punish, warn all men of what will befall those who are faithless to their country and to their alliance with her Majesty."

Our losses were :—Captain Freemantle, 'Barracouta,' and Colonel McNeil, V.C., severely wounded; Captain Forbes, 2 W. I., slightly. Five Naval Brigade wounded. Eleven Houssas killed and 15 wounded.

But not with a small fight like this can the thousands of the Ashantees be dispersed. It had a great moral effect on them, and sowed dissension in their camp. But it was necessary to keep the agony alive, and hence the movement of Sunday last. That movement was intended as a visible check to the Ashantee boastings. They had been for months declaring their resolve to burn Abrakrampa. Acting on information he received, Sir Garnet Wolseley thought it advisable to move a force for the protection of the town, and he entirely succeeded in his object. But the people have not been without their hebdomadal excitement. Colonel Festing, who has already distinguished himself in this war, pushed a reconnaissance from Dunquah towards the Ashantee line of march. He came upon the enemy at breakfast, in a small village. His force consisted of ninety men of the 2nd West India Regiment, 400 to 500 Fantees, and 200 warriors belonging to the king of Animaboo. The Ashantees surprised are estimated at 5000. The Fantees ran at the first shot fired; but,

after a struggle of some severity, the village was carried, and the enemy put to flight with considerable loss. This success was not attained with impunity. Colonel Festing himself received a slight wound. Mr. Godwin, of the 103rd., was severely hit, as was Sub-Lieut. Filliter of the 2nd West India; Captain Haynes, of the same regiment, suffered a wound in the chin; and Sergeant-Major Ryan, of the same, had a dreadful shot in the neck. Such casualties amongst the white leaders tell a tale. In fact, our Fantee allies have as yet proved themselves utterly useless in the field. At Fort Napoleon the other day a crowd of them refused to accept arms—actually turned away and hid themselves when rifles were offered them! Sir Garnet despairs of ever making soldiers of such stuff. The name of an Ashantee affrights them to panic. No success and no leadership appears to stimulate their courage. They lie down in the road and cry, for simple childish fear, and only can be stirred by kicking. But there are some clans in which bravery is found; unfortunately, they are few and weak.

Never did General establish confidence more rapidly than Sir Garnet. He found the coast panic stricken and hopeless of relief; in a month's time he has given security and created faith. The castle itself could barely be considered safe. The town lay as a prey to the Ashantee. In the house where I have my hospitable quarters, the proprietor armed twenty men on his own account, who kept watch and ward; this, within fifty yards of the castle gate. Why the enemy did not

attack is a mystery. They did not profit by the occasion, and now it is our turn. By the following proclamation, it will be seen that the Mountpon, or Mampon, camp is officially announced to be broken up, and the 40,000 men there in full retreat.

PROCLAMATION.

By his Excellency Sir Garnet Joseph Wolseley, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Major-General Commanding her Majesty's Forces on the West Coast of Africa, and Administrator of Her Majesty's Forts and Settlements on the Gold Coast, etc.

GARNET JOSEPH WOLSELEY, Major-General,
Administrator,

To all the Kings, Headmen, Chiefs, and tribes of the Gold Coast, allies of her Majesty the Queen of England, greeting.

I desire that you should know that immediately after the attack made upon Essaman and Ampenee, and the destruction of those places by the English troops under my command, your enemies broke up their encampment at Mampon. Finding that they were unable to contend with us either in the open or in the bush, they are now in full retreat endeavouring to return to their own country by Prahsu; one of their retreating columns has been attacked and dispersed by my troops near Dunquah.

They are trying to carry with them in their flight all the goods of which they have robbed you, all the wives and children whom they have stolen from you.

Men of the Gold Coast, will you allow this?

Will you let the hours slip by whilst your wives, your sons, and your daughters are being driven off to slaughter by the flying enemy?

Will you not pursue them?

Now or never is the time to show that you are men.

I for my part shall hold no man as the friend of her Majesty, or as the friend of this country, who delays for one moment.

You have nothing to fear. I hold the whole road from here to Mansu, so that they cannot assail it. Gather upon my strong forts of Dunquah, Abrakrampa, and Mansu. No one will venture to attack these points. Thence press onwards to the Prah, and oppose your enemies as they are endeavouring to recross the river. If you now act quickly and with vigour, the fall of your enemy and the peace of your country will be secured.

Given under my hand and public seal at Government House, Cape Coast, this thirtieth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy-three, and of her Majesty's reign the thirty-seventh.

By command,

W. Owen Lanyon, Acting Colonial Secretary.

God Save the Queen.

If, after this, the chiefs do not rise and throw themselves on the retiring foe, it will be vain for Exeter Hall to persuade us that the Fantee negro is a man. But I am mistaken if Sir Garnet anticipates much result from his proclamation. If the Coast natives can withstand the incessant worrying of their women, no mere words will stir them. An amusing way of putting laggards to shame exists here. The women turn out by bands of twenty or so, and parade the streets with chalked faces, and armed with little whisks, cut from a palm tree. On meeting a man whom they believe to be shirking the fight, they dance up to him, encircle, and beat him with the whisks. I have already seen a male creature, we will not call him man, most uncomfortably used.

The railway scheme is definitely abandoned, and no one except the indefatigable Major Home, R.E., expects the traction engines to be of use. Sir Garnet complains that of all the persons who volunteered information about this coast, there was not one to mention that the land does not lie flat, but rolls in a succession of low hills. It would take months to lay the rails, and we hope to make this war an affair of weeks. Major Home, however, is resolved to get his steam sapper under weigh this day or tomorrow. He tells me that he is little afraid of the inclines, but dreads a breakdown in some of the innumerable brooks that intersect the country. If the engines can be got to Mansu, where this officer, all alone with the cowardly natives, has boldly erected a stockade to resist ten thousand Ashantees, one half, and that the half most difficult, of our campaign will be achieved.

The mail is closing. When despatches are finished and sent off, Sir Garnet will not be long in getting up another expedition, against the retreating foe. He is not inclined to follow the policy of building bridges for him. I have a warning to get hammock bearers as quickly as possible; for the notice of an advance, with Sir Garnet, is simultaneous with the word "march!"

In the afternoon I presented myself at Government House. This handsome and spacious building is fronted by a broad terrace, below which lies a lawn, planted here and there with shrubs. The 'pride of Barbadoes' mingles its beautiful tufts of scarlet and orange with the golden knobs of the

cassia and rosy disks of oleander. From the terrace, a flight of steps leads to the entrance on the first floor. Sir Garnet Wolseley presently came to me in a lofty saloon, which occupies half the length and all the depth of the building. Again one found cause to wonder at the ancient magnificence of Cape Coast. What a crowd of guests must the builder of this mansion have expected to entertain! Sir Garnet made me welcome with soldierly frankness, and invited me to dinner the same night. He complained of the deficient or erroneous information furnished him by volunteer advisers in England. "Of the scores of people I questioned," said he, "there was not one who represented the interior of the country to be other than a level, over which a railway could be laid with ease. I find it to be so broken and hilly that nobody besides Major Home will believe it possible to take even the traction engine one stage towards Coomassie." When we had obtained a greater experience of the coast, this ignorance on the part of residents became intelligible. No merchant has ever need to travel inland, nor would he dream of doing so unless under strong compulsion. But it exonerates Sir Garnet and the War Office from the charge of precipitation or folly in ordering out the railroad. All my narrative will be evidence how invaluable the rail would have been to us; and authorities at home could not do otherwise than rely upon the information to be got.

Coming back from Government House, I found the streets occupied by women, fantastically dressed, chalked on forehead,

breasts, and shoulders, who danced along in rhythm, shaking fly-flappers of silk and grass. They glided along in a double column, with much waving of arms and swaying of body. I followed the procession; and shortly, at the crossing of a street, a man-wretch was espied. Instantly the ranks dissolved, and women and girls rushed screaming at him, capsized his load, scattering and kicking it, whilst they beat the recreant with their flappers. He, a big fellow, sulkily remonstrated and struggled, whilst retreating in all haste. The female host pursued, rushing, falling back, circling round on either flank, or dashing at him from the front, a crowd of screaming, laughing furies. And so they passed from sight, down the long avenue of umbrella-trees. Such scenes were in progress all over the town, and they, doubtless, produced a good effect for the time. Antique custom requires that in periods of pressing danger the women should pack up their clothes, and go about their business "all face." The theory is, that at such times every male must be absent at the war, and the fate of Peeping Tom is his who lingers about the town. Colonel Harley, the late governor, put a stop to this part of the ceremony.

In the afternoon a mighty yelling roused me from my work. I thought the Ashantees must surely be at hand, and hastened down. The supposition was not unreasonable, for, only the night before, a secret order had been sent round to every officer, bidding him repair in haste to the castle. Shortly after midnight, without any alarm in the sleeping town, all had passed the gate, and taken their appointed

places. Scouts had brought news that the Ashantees meditated a *coup de main,* and the scheme was not thought so improbable as to justify disregard. But this alarm of the following day was only caused by Major Home, R.E., who had at length got his traction engine into working order. It slowly steamed along the sea-front of the town, in the midst of such excitement as Cape Coast Castle has rarely seen. Mad with delight and astonishment, the populace turned out, galloping from the remotest quarters, with ungirt cloths flying wild, to behold the phenomenon. "The earth was all a yell, and the air was all a flame." Dust rose like a veil under those flying feet, and hid engine, sea, and sky in a lurid fog. Wonderful it was that no accidents occurred, for the people seemed demented. They thought this new machine to be a thunderbolt of war, designed to smash Amanquattiah and to blow up Coomassie, without further exertion on their part. No wonder the lazy, cowardly creatures were delighted with the "land-steamer," as they called it. But our officers knew too well it would serve them but very little. Only at some risk could the engine be forced up moderate slopes in the town itself, and there are sharp, steep little hills within two miles, over which no locomotive could travel with waggons attached. Two days after Major Home actually got the engine as far as Akroful, our second camp along the road, but at a fearful risk of explosion. Returning from that trip, it gave up further travel, and passed the remainder of its sojourn in West Africa peacefully employed in sawing boards.

CHAPTER III.

THE AFFAIR OF ABRAKRAMPA.

Start for Abrakrampa—Alarming Message—Painful March—Arrival—Lieut. Pollard, R.N.—Lieut. Woodgate—Narrow Escape of Mr. Pollard—The Kossus—Major Russell, Commandant—Alarums and Excursions—News from Dunquah—Mutiny of Houssas—Appearance and Fortification of the Town—A Dangerous Reconnaissance—Mr. Pollard Recalled—His Majesty of Abrakrampa—Arrival of Lieut. Bryan, R.N.—The Assault Begins—The Ashantee War Song—Boldness and Determination of the Enemy—A Night Attack—Renewal of the Assault—Death of Two Chiefs—Charge of the 2nd W.I.—Relieved by Sir Garnet—Position of the Ashantees—The Cape Coast Volunteers—They March Out—Hurried Retreat of the Enemy.

Camp at Abrakrampa,
November 3rd, 1873.

THE day before yesterday, at four P.M., I received a hint that any correspondent who wished to do his engagements justice had best proceed in all haste hitherwards. The Ashantee General, Amanquattiah, has sworn by his great oath

to take this town before returning to Coomassie, whither the king has summoned him. Sir Garnet, therefore, determined to reinforce the small detachment of marines and blue jackets stationed at Abrakrampa with a force of the 2nd West India Regiment, under the command of Lieutenant Stoker. I was invited to take advantage of this escort starting yesterday at six A.M. I had not yet succeeded in making the necessary arrangements for transport, but the pressing nature of this business stimulated my servants to unusual exertions. I have two, both natives of Cape Coast, one the son of a chief. They are lent by my kind host here under compulsion. The pair, both middle-aged and respectable men, find no pleasure in life under the taunts of their countrywomen, and they took advantage of my arrival to volunteer for service. With the greatest difficulty I found six bearers, but for the transport of my baggage we were obliged to take women. The celebrated vehicle which I call my perambulator I had long since secured; it is, indeed, a sort of compromise between a child's carriage and a Bath-chair, accommodating one person, pulled in front and pushed behind. Punctually at six yesterday I entered the Castle yard, where the West Indians were assembled; but the heavy convoy of a thousand Enfields, with ammunition, all to be carried on human heads, delayed us greatly. When at length we got under march, the bearers of the ambulance cots quietly deposited their burdens by the roadside and vanished. This necessitated a long halt. On resuming progress, a score or so of the transport people threw down

their loads and bolted into the bush, so that the sun began to be very warm before we had made two miles from the Castle. Our troops, also, were very footsore, having been campaigning and countermarching for some weeks. The route lay along the road newly cut to Mansu. It is twelve feet wide, enclosed on either side by the densest undergrowth. There are very few trees, but what there are must be called superb. The underwood consists of mere switches and saplings, matted together by the innumerable creepers of a tropical country. Why the Ashantees having not interfered with our workmen cutting this road, or with officers and police travelling over it every hour, is a constant subject of speculation. We met Captain Godwin coming down in his hammock, wounded, and Mr. Commissary Elliot walking, in the company of his native bearers only, with perfect impunity. The Ashantees might render the road impassable, but they have made no effort of any sort to interrupt our proceedings. Mr. Elliot gave us startling news. The enemy had been felt all along the jungle path from Assaboo to our destination. Startling indeed would it have been to hear such a report under any circumstances in the bush, but with troops so tired we could not but feel terribly anxious. Calling the sergeants round, Mr. Stoker gave them a short address, mentioning the report and charging them to see carried out the only arrangement possible under the conditions of our case. The carriers were sent to the rear under charge of the rear-guard; an advance-guard was numbered off, and the main body formed

four deep in the best order available. So we marched another mile or so, to Assaboo, as this small collection of mud-huts embosomed in trees mighty in girth is called. We found there the letter from Major Russell. It warned us to expect attack, probably on the left flank. It also announced that Major Russell hoped to see us at Abrakrampa by one o'clock. The tone of the letter showed a soldier-like anxiety which boded ill.

We had hoped to rest two hours in Assaboo, but in face of this news not more than twenty minutes could possibly be allowed. The heat was most terrible, it was the hottest day for weeks; tired and footsore, I could not but regret the fool-hardiness which had led me to march halfway to Assaboo, whilst my perambulator rolled empty behind. It could not enter the jungle path, which is barely a foot wide. There was nothing for me, though only three days in the country, but to tramp it with the negroes. Major Russell had sent to us twenty-four Fantees to scout along our line of march, but we knew too well that not one of them would even go to look for an Ashantee. In single file, panting, and with lips burnt, Mr. Stoker and I tramped on at the head of our men, who followed in single file; and behind them were a thousand Enfield rifles borne by carriers. Whilst life endures, none of us can forget that march! I cannot find words to describe it, and time fails me. At a village half way to Abrakrampa I fairly broke down, and had to take refuge in a hammock.

Nov. 4th. I left the story of our adventures at Assaboo,

about one o'clock on Saturday. A striking air of stillness and dread hung over that hamlet. It is a lovely spot. Though huts are squalid and ruinous, nowhere in the world are there loftier or more graceful trees, nowhere a growth of flowers and soft-leaved shrubs more delicately beautiful. For acres round, the earth is shadowed by banana plantations, amongst the trunks of which flickers of sunlight sprinkle gold on the flowers below. In the street of the village stands a row of fig-trees. Under the cover of these, a quivering aspen shade, sat all the males of the place, silent, waiting, their guns between their knees. A shadow heavier than tree can throw, lay on them—the shadow of the Ashantee. Their women were gone, waiting in the bush; their fruits and crops lay rotting. None dared go forth to gather them. At the sound of an Ashantee whisper the Fantee flees. But we had no time to think of these things, no eyes for scenery, no spirit for moralising. It is only now, forty-eight hours after, that I recall things seen as in a baleful dream. With our Fantee volunteers in front, just for form's sake, we set out again. Led by Mr. Stoker, the soldiers trudged in a single line behind. It was seldom we had the four leading files in sight, so narrow and so winding was the track. The undergrowth sprang so thick that a hundred guns might have been pointed at us within six feet distance. A thousand savages might have been concealed not further from the path and we never have suspected it. To send West Indian soldiers into the bush would have been folly, even

though they had been fresh; and the Fantees walked steadily ahead, heedless of command to explore our flank. Such are the difficulties and the dangers of the war before us. At three o'clock, sick with fever and heat, we reached Abrakrampa, a little village, called a town in Africa. It stands upon the slope of a hill, in a situation favourable for defence. Many blacks hung about—Houssas, Kossus, and native levies. Fifty marines and blue-jackets were left by Sir Garnet Wolseley on his last raid. The merit of the very excellent system of defence adopted here lies between Lieutenant Pollard, of H.M.S. 'Simoom,' and Captain Buckle, of the Engineers. In a war where such extraordinary courage, self-reliance, and devotion have been exhibited, it would be invidious and unjust to signal any one officer as pre-eminent. When we get to Mansu I shall have to speak of Major Home, R.E., who persisted in carrying his military road up to that point, in spite of three recommendations to return from the General himself. At Acrofoo I shall mention Captain Thompson, of the Queen's Bays, and at other points heroic names will be signalised; but at this village of Abrakrampa Lieutenant Pollard is the hero of my tale. He came up hither on a special mission to organise the levies of the King of Abra, arriving on the 14th ult. with two policemen (natives). He found the Ashantees in force on every side. They had as yet received no check, excepting at Elmina, and were still elated by their great success of the Prah. The King of Abra furnished about sixty men, Fantees. A camp of 20,000 Ashantees lay so close that their war drums

could be heard, as they can at this moment within two hundred yards of Abrakrampa. Why they did not attack this paltry nest of their hereditary foes can be no more explained than their disregard of our road-cutting and fortifying arrangements. Fortunately for Lieutenant Pollard, they did not do so, though every spy brought tales of the General's sanguinary designs against the town. Probably contempt saved it for a while. There was once, however, a false alarm, and Mr. Pollard, with horror and disgust, beheld every human being fly to the bush, excepting those whom he had locked in the church. On the 18th, Lieutenant Woodgate came in with forty Houssas. The work of fortification proceeded, but no one can doubt that the two officers and their brave Mahomedans would have perished miserably if but a few score Ashantees had advanced. Only last week, Lieutenant Pollard had a narrow escape from death. He conducted a party of his Fantees to reconnoitre the enemy's camp, and the Ashantees espied and attacked him. Just exchanging a shot, the whole force bolted, except six, who threw Mr. Pollard into a hammock, and carried him away by paths unknown to the enemy. Mr. Woodgate and the young sailor worked manfully, until Sir Garnet, hearing of their hourly peril, pushed a reconnaissance thus far, and left them fifty marines and blue-jackets under charge of Lieutenant Wells of the 'Barracouta,' the officer who so distinguished himself in the battle of Elmina. Some hundred of native allies were also given them, amongst the rest a number of our Kossu

friends, tum-tum, ju-ju-helmet and all. Very fine fighters these men have proved, somewhat to our surprise. Major Russell, of the 13th Hussars, took charge, with Lieutenant Gordon, 98th Highlanders—another of the sons England has much reason to be proud of—as acting staff-officer. The others comprising our brave little band will be named in their order.

I was too utterly tired out, too feverish, to eat or sleep. The officers showed kindness of the true sort in leaving me alone, only begging that I would use no restraint at all on making myself comfortable. They knew by experience what are the feelings of a man fresh from England at the conclusion of so long a march. I speak of a matter otherwise so unimportant as my own sufferings, in order that English people may realise, to some extent, the nature of this war. I have experienced the sun of either tropic in many lands; but that of the West African Coast, although not so severe if measured by the thermometer, has a deadly faintness all its own, and not one of those contrivances by which man diminishes its agony in other realms, is even heard of here.

As the only correspondent on the spot or expected, I was given the room of honour in the mess-house, but at four A.M. arrived a *confrère* in hot haste, having heard of my departure. I was in time to take part, had it been possible, in a great reconnaissance of all the native forces, headed by their white officers, towards the Ashantee camp. Some shots were fired, a prisoner taken, and the enemy found to be in their former position with undiminished numbers. So ended the proceed-

ings of the day. Next morning a slight touch of fever declared itself, but it yielded to quinine. By every scout and picket we received news of great excitement in the enemy's camp, and it seemed more than probable an attack was imminent. But the day passed in incessant work of brain and hand. Yesterday, before breakfast, the alarm was given. The bugle called every man to his station. Our marines and blue-jackets manned the church as if it had been a two-decker. I took my station on the roof. The Ashantees were upon us at last! but a party of Kossus and Houssas, rushing to reconnoitre in wild glee of battle, soon announced that the repose of their camp was yet unbroken. One after another, however, they brought in four prisoners—three slaves and one real warrior—all of whom concurred in the tale that a council of war had voted the attack, and it was to take place this morning. At six A.M. the defences were hastily completed, and a sudden call to arms in the afternoon showed an unexpected intelligence of the arrangements made for them on the part of our native levies.

Just after closing my letter yesterday, which has gone to Cape Coast under charge of Captain Buckle, R.E., a brisk alarm occurred. Most of the young officers in camp went out for a reconnaissance with a number of Houssas and Winebah men. Pushing close to the village occupied by the Ashantees, they came upon a new picket posted on that road. The leading scout, a Kossu, fired and dropped his man. Simultaneously, the bullets of the picket whistled between the

officers of the advance guard, but without wounding any. Thereupon the Winebah men were seized with a panic, and rushed back, capsizing all in their way. As they went they poured volleys of bullets into the air and the empty bush. In an instant our camp was alive with men hurrying to their stations, but the Ashantees made no demonstrations of advance. We went into the bush after a while, and met the officers returning. It is the old story over again: the Houssas mad to attack, the Fantees running at the first shot. The Winebah men, however, seem to be heartily ashamed of themselves, which is a better sign. All we have learnt is that the enemy hold their ground. There is one comfort in the affair; perhaps this slight success may encourage them to attack us.

We know nothing of mails up here. A runner takes our post each day, and carries it to Cape Coast, or loses his head on the way, as the case may be. The few letters we have in return are military communications. The service of steamers on this coast is so extremely irregular that the advertised dates of sailing help us not a jot towards a knowledge of their arrivals and departures. I shall continue to note down any events of importance, and send the letters separately, trusting they will arrive in a mass from time to time. To-day we have had two alarms already, one of attack from the foe, and one of mutiny amongst the Houssas. On the night of the 3rd loud cheering and drumming were heard in the Ashantee camp, so loud, indeed, that

in every part of the village they were distinctly audible. Our scouts and two women slaves deserting reported that heavy reinforcements had come into the enemy from Dunquah, where there was a serious engagement on Monday. We have to regret the loss of Lieutenant Eardley Wilmot, R.A., shot through the heart, and Captain Jones, of the 2nd W.I., severely wounded. This news comes to us from Acrofoo, for we have had no communication from Dunquah direct, and, with the return of a large force of Ashantees to this place, causes an unpleasant surmise. All the means of information to our hands point to attack as a certainty. We were under arms all yesterday, and lay down in our clothes—not that that was anything novel. To-day, from earliest dawn, an increased noise marked the enemy's activity. On the brow of the hill, I could so plainly hear the voices and cheering that it was evident the Ashantees lay in great force within 200 yards of the spot. Lord Gifford, of the 24th Regiment, going out to reconnoitre, got so close to them that his interpreter was able to translate their conversation. The chiefs were urging their men to attack, but the latter held back. "Here's a bit of cleared ground, with no one on it," exclaimed a voice, and at the same moment quicker eyes detected Lord Gifford and his scout behind a tree. Both parties fired, and an Ashantee was seen to drop. At other parts of the line they showed themselves feeling for the defenders, and an irregular fire ensued. Our enemies are evidently getting impatient of the long delay. All accounts

agree that they are not aware of the sailors' presence. Lieutenant Wells, indeed, received yesterday an order of recall, but he has written to his superior officer pointing out the peril in which this place would be were his men withdrawn, and adding that not a single case of sickness has occurred since the occupation began. We are waiting the reply with some anxiety. A body of fifty marines arrived at Assaboo on Monday with a 12 lb. howitzer. That hamlet is only three miles from here, but three miles of bush, perhaps occupied by Ashantees, is as good or as bad as fifty. At noon our Houssas, the Mahomedan fighting negroes whom we have recruited, made a mutiny, which, if Mr. Wells had withdrawn his men, might have proved most serious. Lieutenant Gordon, of the 98th, their commanding officer, ordered them out to build an abattis. They replied that they were soldiers, not slaves to work, and, on being pressed, the greater part of them flatly refused. Mr. Gordon ordered the ringleaders into custody, whereupon the whole body of mutineers rushed after him into the little guard-house, arms and all. Strong measures were evidently needed. Major Russell hurried down, addressed the men in a few stern words, translated by the interpreter, and instantly sent for our invaluable sailors. With some pushing the Houssas were put into line, and piled arms after a little hesitation. The sailors came down from the church at the double, formed behind the line of rifles, and loaded in an instant. The command, "Quick march," was given to the Houssas, and slowly and reluctantly

they fell back. Meanwhile, fifty of the 2nd West Indians ran up and formed a second line behind the rifles. Major Russell then addressed the mutineers briefly, pointing out that a soldier's first duty is to obey, and announcing that the ringleaders would be sent to Cape Coast to-morrow for trial by court-martial. They were dismissed unarmed, with a warning that their Sniders would not be returned until they had apologised to Mr. Gordon and promised to obey for the future. Most fortunate was it that we had the white men at hand, and a commander so quick and resolute as Major Russell, or wild work might have ensued.

It is evident that Amanquattiah, the Ashantee General, must make a move somewhere soon. Colonel Wood is known to have occupied Essicoomah on Monday night, and should be advancing fast on his rear. The Marines, with their dreaded howitzer, are at Assaboo. We hold this place, and at Dunquah is Colonel Festing, who attacks the enemy every day. The Ashantee position gets intolerable. They have not enough to eat, and sickness of many kinds is decimating them. Amanquattiah's son died of small-pox last week—a calamity which entailed the massacre of many wretched slaves. Discontent prevails, by all accounts. The fighting men want to get home, to enjoy well-earned repose and the booty of their campaign. The chiefs, fearing for their heads, will not go back until the recent disasters have been avenged. It is at Abrakrampa that they hope to wipe out all scores, and to-morrow is the fateful day.

5*th*. I closed a very hasty note yesterday with an announcement that the long-expected attack upon our camp was coming off this morning without fail. No one doubted this time, whether here or at Cape Coast. In the middle of the night arrived Lieutenant Saunders, R.A., with a reinforcement of twenty police, and a small signal gun. Colonel Wood is also reported to be on the march from Elmina to our assistance; and this news I have every reason to believe. Although our scouts report all quiet in the Ashantee camp, most of the officers are afraid that our savage foe has taken alarm and means to retreat without an action. Anyhow, it is evident that Abrakrampa is a centre of interest at this moment, and ours is the turning-point of the invasion.

The appearance of the town may be better described now, whilst one has time and calmness for observation; in a little while we may be too busily engaged for sketching. There is one street in it, narrow at the lower part, but widening to a handsome breadth opposite the mess-house, once a missionary residence. This open space is shadowed by a few small trees, which, if they bear fruit, are unknown by name to us. Above this *Place d'Armes* the huts close in for some yards, leaving another open space before the church, from which one can see down to the clearing on which the Assaboo road debouches. A ditch and rampart have been thrown across, fifty yards from the end of the huts, all of which are loopholed for direct or flank firing. At the cross street, right and left on the edge

of the cleared ground, West Indian soldiers, with the Kossus and other Sierra Leone recruits, have their station. The soldiers occupy flanking huts and light barricades; the natives guard the open. Armed police lend their aid in case these precautions fail to keep back the enemy. In that event our troops retire behind the rampart and ditch in the street itself, and to the houses on each side, reinforcing the supports on either flank, who would still be guarding the ditches, huts, and devious ways. At the main guard, or *Place d'Armes*, the principal force of natives is collected, ready to support any point. The greater part of our invaluable Houssas have their station here, and with them are some four hundred stupid and cowardly Abras. Behind the mission-house, on the right flank of the works, the hill rises very steeply, and twelve Houssas are considered ample to defend this approach from the walled courtyard. The fifty yards above on this side are guarded by huts with bamboo stockades. Thence to the church—twenty yards or so—the sailors and marines take charge, allowing no Fantees to pass. These have been unmistakably informed that if they fly thither for protection, they will be met by a worse fire than that they are escaping, The left flank is broken thence at every point, by parapets, walls, and loopholes. The church, of course, is our main reliance. With but a few more men it would be absolutely impregnable to native troops, however brave.

The incidents of garrison life in an outpost expecting attack are much the same in all wars. Pick and spade are cease-

lessly handled; engineers make drawings, cross them with radii of fire, and sit deep musing over their own productions; enterprising young officers take a few men for an hour's stroll in the enemy's direction; soldiers dose through the hot hours of the day, waking only to eat and smoke, and to heartily curse the foe who does not come on. A boy is caught selling the prohibited grog, is tried, convicted, lashed to a tree, and howls peccavi to the tune of a rope's end. By the bye, we have had a chief tied up. Mr. Pollard, who is always busy, took out a scouting party of Fantees, and was suddenly surprised to observe them pushing manfully to the front out of sight. A few moments after, the mystery was explained when he came to a by-path on which every man had sloped. For making no effort to stop this disgraceful proceeding, and for refusing to produce the cowards, on his return to camp, the chief in command of them received three dozen well laid on. He bore the punishment well.

I shall not attempt to prophesy what the Ashantee movement or our own will be; for my part, I think it very premature to believe them cowed because they have not kept faith in attacking us this morning. Last night there was heavy firing at their camp up to a very late hour. It may well be supposed that we are on the *qui vive*. The Ashantees are not accustomed to fight at night, for the thorns and sticks of the bush are desperate obstacles to barefooted troops; but the moon is at the full, and it must be remembered that in the

art of war our enemy is not to be classed as a mere savage. He is unquestionably brave, has a military system by no means barbarous, and practises many tactics. His range of ideas in this respect is altogether remarkable. Major Russell neglects no precaution of pickets and outposts, but who can see that his orders are carried out in the bush at night? We cannot but feel anxious as dark comes on, and we hear unexplained firing in the bush, and the rumbling of war drums, and the tinkling of war chiefs' triangles. About ten o'clock last night, when the moon was at its brightest, two shots close by our camp brought out nearly every officer. Major Russell and Lieutenant Wells, R.N., slipped through the stockade to reconnoitre personally. Half-a-dozen blue-jackets stole after to see the fun. The mystery of night, the hazy shadows of the forest, quelled even these reckless spirits, and they talked in whispers, gathered round the sentry; he, standing on a pile of brush, leaned forward, with rifle pointed, listening to the night voices—faint, dreamy, and mysterious. It was a picture for Vernet. The moonlight spread its livery of blue and silver upon the narrow clearing. At half-musket shot the forest loomed, grey at its crown, blue-black in the shadow beneath. Upon the grey hung a band of silvery cloud, the deadly moisture rising from the earth. Fireflies gleamed for a moment and went out, or clung like tiny lights upon a spray. Faintly the monotonous beat of tum-tums reached us from the Ashantee camp; faintly the cry of prowling animals came from the forest. A solitary shot, like the

boom of a distant drum, reminded us of the morrow's menace, but so still and peaceful was the scene, so softly romantic the light, it needed an effort to recall the truth of our situation. Half an hour we lingered with ears painfully strained, until the giant figures of our chiefs returning showed themselves against the background, and relieved us of our anxiety.

Yesterday Lieutenant Pollard, R.N., was recalled, and proceeded to Dunquah the same evening, a perilous journey. His offence is rank against the precious majesty of Abra, and that doughty monarch has the influence to avenge himself. Lieutenant Pollard, standing five feet five, threatened to punch the royal head, towering above him at a height of six feet four. His majesty burst into tears, and lodged a complaint with Major Russell, who was bound to forward it. Mr. Pollard alleges that the king is injuring the defence by his cowardice, laziness, and drunken habits. Perhaps it is not the best way of correcting him to threaten a black eye, but let me point out that some allowance is due in a hot climate, and, moreover, the threat was not carried into effect. I must give a few words to the king of Abra. He is, or was, rather, a remarkable character, a man of note at the Gold Coast. His age was about eight-and-twenty or thirty, stature most unusual, and features decidedly handsome. We made him out to be six feet four in naked soles, but he always wore thick sandals. His figure was not good, being too narrow at the shoulders, but he had an upright carriage, not devoid of

stateliness when sober, and his strength, no doubt, was considerable. Nothing of the negro marked his face, except the colour. He had a habit of stalking about, draped in ten yards or so of old brocade or damask, monstrously like a dirty table-cloth, with bogy inside. He used to drink vast quantities of palm wine, which very thoroughly intoxicates for a time; I would not hint that our king was above consuming other liquors, for no statement could be more opposed to truth. He would drink whatever was offered him, he would smoke any pipe lying on the table, and he would prig tobacco from white or black with equal condescension. We dreaded the royal visit, especially at morning, when his majesty had breakfasted on palm wine. Such was the king of Abra, now dead. Before decease, however, he found an opportunity of showing his gratitude to England for the preservation of his life and territory. When the Ashantees fled, he flatly refused to pursue, and when six hundred carriers were assessed as his contribution, he supplied one hundred and fifty. But, on the strength of Philistinic height, prominent nose, and gentle eyes, he found people who believed in him to the last. Amongst them was not Lieutenant Pollard, who paid the penalty.

Before leaving for Dunquah, Pollard visited the king, who straightway asked of him a "dash," or present. His next visit was to the chief so severely flogged yesterday for deserting his officer and encouraging his men to do the like. This potentate Pollard found in a hut, surrounded by wives and

slaves, who howled as for the dying. Pollard pushed through to a heap of palm leaves on which lay the chief, and offered him his hand, saying, "I am going away, chief. We have been a long time together in face of the enemy, and I should like to part as a friend." The chief, when this was interpreted, fervently grasped the offered hand, and said, "You are a leopard of war. We black men are sheep before the butcher. Give me a shilling." Pollard hastily forked out a bob, and sloped in a hurry. Only slang seems appropriate for the telling of this mean tale! It is true, however, for I have verified it. Does any one want more evidence as to the value of our Fantees? Captain Bromhead takes Lieutenant Pollard's place.

Yesterday afternoon arrived Lieutenant Bryan, R.N., with Kroomen carriers from the fleet. He brought a peremptory order to Lieutenant Wells to withdraw his sailors and marines. Amongst the Kroomen was a red-headed fellow, immensely broad of shoulder, blue-eyed, fair-skinned, tattooed on cheek and nose after the fashion of his tribe. This is the son of an American captain. He speaks no word of English, but any casual observer would take him for an Englishman. Lieutenant Bryan waits to see what will come of Mr. Wells' application for delay.

Other recruits we have the same day. Thirty-two Kossus suddenly turn up, headed by an extraordinary little giant whom we call the Commander. Sixteen of these men have deserted from Colonel Wood at Beulah, and Major Russell is puzzled what to do with them. They have committed no

military crime according to their own code. Lieutenant Gordon, 93rd, recruited them, and him they have come to seek. By what means it was borne to them that Mr. Gordon lay at Abrakrampa, and by what instinct it was given them to find their way hither, through trackless forests, through a population understanding no word of their language, not I nor any of us can tell; but these strange fellows duly turned up and offered themselves to the man who raised them, as pigeons find their home. The little Commander headed the band, and marched his men straight up to the mess-house, in the door of which he stood, the quaintest and most striking figure. I was writing there at the moment. The mess-house has one little room in the middle, with two tiny bed-chambers on each side. Facing the village is one door, and, opposite to it, a larger entrance, looking into a small courtyard with cook-houses and huts all round. Once on a time this little court was sacred to Abra children, and the domestic privacy of the mission-wife, who there cooked her simple meal, and tried to inculcate our English *cuisine* amongst the damsels of Abrakrampa. At present, it is occupied by a dozen Moslem Houssas, who lounge and smoke and sleep beneath the shadow of the mud wall. Two or three sentries keep watch and ward, peering across the valley, in the pool at bottom of which are always some of their number bathing. The valley is filled with boughs and pointed, broken trunks, forming an abattis most dangerous to barefoot troops. At the rise on the other side springs the eternal forest, sunny, brilliant, mysterious.

But I was speaking of the Commander. He stood in the outer doorway, and made noises. I looked up, as did Mr. Gordon, 98th. We saw a tiny man, scarce five feet high, but built like a little giant. His torso made a study for a painter, so muscular, graceful, and firm it was. He wore no dress except the crimson loin-cloth. Now, as ever, some comrade bore his rifle and accoutrements. Upright and sturdy, a very picture of the savage, he swaggered in the sunlit doorway. Across his forehead remained the scar of a desperate wound, received many years ago. The skull itself gaped so widely one could place a finger in the dent. Often shall I have need to refer to the Commander.

5 P.M.

During a slight cessation of the furious fire we have been undergoing on the left front for the last hour and a half, I hasten to record the story of Act 1 in our little drama. The cheering, drumming, and desultory shots which had amused us all the morning grew louder and more frequent as the day wore on. At about 3.30 P.M. our line suddenly opened, and all rushed to their respective stations. No chance of a false alarm this time. When I reached the church roof the volleys of our men had been stopped, but the Ashantee muskets alone, booming and full-voiced as small artillery, made a deafening fusillade. Our foes were still in the bush, but quite upon the edge. Columns of smoke arose amongst the trees as volley after volley was fired by the thousands congregated in one spot or another. They were evidently

working down towards the valley lying along our left flank.

Suddenly, as we looked out through the bamboo rafters—for our church has been unthatched for fear of fire—a myriad voices struck up the Ashantee war song. Very grand and stirring it is, sounding quite unlike any savage music I had heard hitherto. With ten thousand voices chanting in chorus, for there was all that number, the effect was so fine that no wonder Fantee hearts fail them at the sound. Scores of horns modulated in tone played a wild accompaniment, and even the tum-tums came in harmoniously. When the song was finished, the fusillade recommenced more furiously than ever. Inspirited by their own noise, and stirred, as we hear, by the encouragement of their women, posted behind, the enemy rushed into sight. They were met, however, by a fire too crushing for savages to stand, and again they fell back, to sing, drum a little, and madly fire and advance once more. I could not have believed that troops armed with muzzle-loaders, for the most part, could have kept up such a thundering roar. The sunny landscape was so draped in smoke, lurid and yellow in the declining rays, that we could not see a foot distant from the church top. Through the dense cloud now and again a line of leaping flame close to the ground told that our troops were firing. At longer intervals the Sniders made an angry crackle borne above the din. In the thick of the fight, just as a warning, Lieutenant Wells gave the order for a volley from both "decks." On the port side issued a sheet of flame

that stilled the uproar for a moment, to recommence immediately. The church became silent again, though every sailor lay expectant and eager behind his breastwork of rolled tents or boxes of earth. Every marine stood at the ready by window and loop-hole. What a contrast on the two sides of the building! To starboard all was green and sunny; the higher trees alone were dimmed at top by a thin wreath of smoke, whilst the grass green of the lower bush, endless in variety of tone and shape of leaf, stood out in all the brilliant clearness of tropic light. To port, heaven and earth were hidden in smoke, impenetrable yellow in mid sky, grey-blue in the eddies and puffs near earth. Towards 5 P.M., after an hour and a half of hideous uproar, the enemy's fire began to slacken, and a rocket from the church, well directed, reduced them to comparative silence. We took advantage of the break to get some dinner, during which all the talk was of narrow escapes. Every one is astonished at the boldness and persistence of the attack, and marvels that savages can keep up such a heavy fire. Opinions are divided as to the probability of a night attack, but I myself feel sure they will come on again this time, be their regular practice what it may.

Nov. 6th, 10.30 A.M.

At 7.30 last night the row began anew. It had never ceased, indeed, but I mean to express that savage hubbub of song, horn, and musketry which marks a real attack. The moon had just risen when the Sniders of the 2nd West

Indian Regiment posted on our left flank gave notice of a new attempt in another direction. This time, under cover of the night and their own smoke, the Ashantees made a furious rush upon our lines. Some say they came within twenty yards. If so, the aim of our troops must have been very wild, for there is no trace of blood in front of them this morning; although not being on the spot, I should not care to——

4.30 P.M.

At the moment I have marked with a line, my placid meditations were disturbed by the renewal of the *vacarme*, more furious, if that be possible, than on the day before. But the interrupted story must be finished. I think I was about to say that I should not care to contradict eye-witnesses. Having seen to-day the spirit and steadiness of our West Indian troops, I almost feel justified in declaring that, if under any advantage an attacking force were so injudicious as to come within twenty——Really these lines become ridiculous—the fact is, I have just been struck upon the leg by a spent slug, which, as everybody knows, will give a sting. To resume: the 2nd West Indians fired her Majesty's ammunition with the greatest liberality, if not accuracy; so did the Houssas, now penitent; so did the Winebahs and Mampons, and all our miscellaneous recruits; but the most extravagant of them were outdone by the King's men, the natives of the place, who really fired as if the whole end of this war was to encourage the trade in lead and gunpowder. Heedless

of the direction in which the enemy might be lying, deaf to entreaty and unconscious of command, they blazed away towards every point of the compass at once, and kept up the fusillade without regard to time or the limited contents of their pouches. It is probable, however, that the Ashantees, though more determined, are at least as reckless in the use of arms, for the indiscriminate blazing of our black allies seemed to daunt them as much as the better regulated fire of the disciplined troops. Any way they did not mark out their station for particular attack, which was fortunate. As regards the tactics of the engagement I can give no information, for the truth is that none were displayed. The arrangements for defence, begun by Lieutenant Pollard, improved and extended by Captain Buckle, of the Engineers, and supervised by Major Russell, of the Lancers, proved to be so excellent that every position left to native guard was flanked by a fire from troops more or less trustworthy. Our little 'Nelly,' too, the yacht signal gun, forgotten years ago at Cape Coast Castle, made herself both heard and felt from the roof of the church. Nevertheless, the Ashantees persevered in their attack, returning when repulsed, dashing here and there with ominous obstinacy. Though they knew they had much the best of it, our natives began to show anxiety. They have such a long memory of defeat and humiliation. Something decidedly effective was required, and the something required turned up. Lieutenant Gordon marked down one particular spot in the enemy's line whence the firing was unusually active and concentrated.

After long observation from various points, Mr. Wells, R.N. himself aimed a rocket at the place. Like a fiery demon the missile hurtled down the slope, sped across the valley, and burst with a roar at the very spot. Loud shouts and broken versicles of the war-song burst out at this event; but they were shouts of consternation. The rocket was thrown about 1.30 A.M. From that hour the firing died gradually away till four P.M., when it ceased.

This morning bets ran high that the Ashantees had had enough of it. The scouts sent to their late position brought back such evidence of a hasty flight, in arms and fetiches and furniture abandoned, that the believers in another engagement felt wavering in their faith. Only one corpse had been found, whereof the head was produced—head of a pleasant-looking youth, shot through the brain from behind; but the scouts reported an abundance of blood and marks of bodies dragged through the grass. They also found, later in the morning, a twelve-foot road recently cut through the bush parallel to our left flank, in which also were many tokens of disaster. But between ten and eleven A.M. to-day—we have few watches here, and of those few that go—doubt was set at rest. Doggedly the foe recommenced his attack on our left front as before. Major Russell had posted twenty Kossus on the extreme brow of our hill, where they could fire on the enemy advancing. But the Kossu differs from most other negroes in that he belongs to a race trusting in cold steel. Without shadow of fear, the picket slowly withdrew to join its

comrades formed in line below the hill as soon as the Ashantees advanced.

Beneath the brow, wholly hidden from our sight, but not from the sight of those posted on the left flank, is a green valley thick with plantations and brush. Down this the Ashantees advanced slowly, skirmishing in bodies of perhaps a hundred each. We returned no answer to their thundering fire. Suddenly the quick eyes of our sailors in the church detected a brighter colour in the smoke. "They're creeping up the hill," they cried. Nearer and nearer the gun-cracks sounded, whiter grew the smoke. "Let them come, let them come; don't frighten them," was the cry; but human nature could not stand the temptation when a fine fellow, most particularly black, showed himself above the brow waving a sword and cheering his men on. "What a plucky nigger!" we exclaimed; "hurrah for him!" But he fell at the word, riddled with our bullets. His men drew off in great haste probably, but the others in the valley continued their advance firing; on the boom of their volleys the sharp crackling of rifles was angrily borne. This came from the Houssas and West Indians far down on the left, who had all the valley open before them. Suddenly, whilst we waited for something to fire at, Major Russell's voice was heard shouting, "Don't fire; I'm going to send twenty of the 2nd West Indians to clear the hill." Almost at the word the fine fellows lying in the trench below crept swiftly out, mounted the slope in a run, and poured a deadly fire from its crest. The enterprise

needed courage of no low order, and well was it performed. The Ashantees fled back up the valley, pursued as far as the bush by their antagonists, the first of whom, charging right up to the deadly brushwood, was Captain Grant. To overtake them ran an eager band of Kossus, armed with the sword only. They came galloping back in twos and threes together, laden with spoil and dripping heads, which told how deadly had been our single volley and the crushing fire of the 2nd West Indians. A hearty cheer we gave those gallant fellows as they leisurely returned beneath our lofty station. But as they retired the Ashantees reoccupied their former place without a moment's delay. Once more a brave fellow showed himself upon the hill crest, and again there was a cry to lead them on. But he, a fair-skinned man this time, tumbled headlong, like the other, under our irrepressible storm of bullets. The West Indians charged again and yet again, the last time driving back our enemy to the recesses of the bush, but still at their retirement the puffs of smoke spread gradually on until the lost positions were reoccupied and the Ashantees spread slowly but surely across our front and down either flank, until at the moment at which I write three parts of the ellipse round our position are wrapped in smoke. Numbers even greater than we had thought must they have had to complete such an investment. The fire slackens nowhere, and yet tree by tree, and copse by copse, the ring of fire completes itself. 'Nelly,' our tiny gun, has burnt three-fourths of her ammunition; the rockets are all

expended. We in the church, the West Indians on either flank, and the Houssas, have fired volley after volley; the native levies have made their ridiculous assaults, and the Kossus have sallied out again and again; but still these resolute savages creep on, with incessant roar of gun and song. Their losses have been heavy, beyond doubt. All the earth round our position is thick with corpses. The Houssas in one point-blank volley killed many a score, as Lieutenant Gordon assures me, having passed over the ground; but I fear the scheme they have in view is utterly to harass us, to give us no rest day or night until exhaustion opens some gap. Unless help comes they may possibly succeed.

7.30 P.M.

Help has come, and in the best shape. Sir Garnet himself, with 300 marines and blue-jackets, 100 men of the 2nd West Indians, and 20 Houssas, arrived by forced marches on the Assaboo road an hour ago. He brings supplies and ammunition, both sorely needed at the time of his arrival. Slugs were falling like rain in the lower part of the town, and scarcely more than three hundred yards of the circuit remained clear.

With the reckless indifference to scouting which appears usual with the Ashantees, the General's approach seems to have been quite unsuspected, and he found it open. Most glad were we all to see him, after twenty-four hours of almost incessant fighting. It is not that we have any serious loss to mourn. The returns are not yet made out, but our

doctor informs me that twenty-five cases of wounded is the utmost he expects to reckon up. Amongst them is a marine, hit by a slug in the eye, dangerously; and another in the neck, severely. The remainder are natives, Houssas and Kossus. Only one West Indian was hit in all their gallant charges. It was not the slugs of the enemy we feared, but their prodigious numbers, which enabled them to harass us by day and night, and to keep us always awake. From this anxiety we are now relieved. Sir Garnet Wolseley's plans are most decidedly secret, and I shall not speculate as to his intended movements; but it is reasonable to think that he would not wish to press the enemy too hard from this direction. Colonel Wood is already in their rear; Colonel Festing, at Dunquah, harasses them without ceasing; Major Russell, on the contrary, had imperative instructions not to attack. It is probable, therefore, that the General desires to push his foes homewards towards the Prah, perhaps expecting a great muster of their hereditary enemies at the Ford, where, if defeated, they cannot split up in bands to hurry against the wretched Fantees. Such would most likely be the result, if he drove them to despair thus far from home.

On the Roof of Abrakrampa Church, November 7th, 1873.

To be relieved after a siege is a pleasure not without its drawbacks. Our space was a little cramped when I came last Saturday, and troops have been coming in ever since. The arrival of the General, attended by his staff and nearly

two hundred whites, has driven the Quartermaster to despair. Almost all of us besieged residents have been turned from bed and board. I have taken refuge on the church top, and think myself to be congratulated on the shelter of a thatchless roof. Our little mess of four in the king's palace—somewhat darker, smaller, and less comfortable than a labourer's cottage at home—has been swollen by a succession of additions to an indeterminate number. Cooking and serving go on all day; whilst, to increase our amusing miseries, Lieutenant Hart, of the 31st Regiment, has ruthlessly demolished our cookhouse in the interests of his fortifications; but there is compensation even here, for one of the new chums (Captain Fremantle, commanding the Naval Brigade), positively brought up the scrag-end of a leg of mutton, the first fresh meat we had tasted since coming here. I had curiously forgotten previously to give the description of our defending force. Those who have the right to tell the tale of this humorous but important siege, are 610 in number; of these 53 are whites—sailors and marines from the 'Simoom' and 'Barracouta'; 93 are West Indian troops of the 2nd Regiment, under Captain Grant and Lieutenant Stoker; 100 Houssas, commanded by Lieutenant Gordon, 98th Regiment; 110 Kossus, under Lieutenant Woodgate, 64 Sierra Leone Volunteers, and 54 Mampons make Major Russell's regiment, with 95 Winnebahs, under Lieutenant Lord Gifford, 24th Regiment; and 12 police are attached to the post service. Besides these, there are 30 Kroomen belonging to the men-

of-war, who certainly appear to be as brave as possible. The Fantee forces I do not profess to number, nor does any one feel interest in the matter. Such cowardly, slavish wretches are not fit to be counted. To-day, in addition to those coming last night, near 1000 men of the Cape Coast Volunteers have marched in. They have the reputation of being desperate scoundrels, only restrained by their cowardice. Colonel Wood also has just arrived from Beulah with 50 of the 2nd West Indians, some natives, and a horse.

In the afternoon, the Ashantees displaying no desire to attack in force, Sir Garnet ordered out the volunteers. The very drollest of all military spectacles was their advance. Such an army would be held too grotesque even for Christmas in the pantomime. In front of the procession stalked a fetish-man, clothed in strips of scarlet cloth like a scare-crow. Those wretches behind might have been the very worst cases of disease confided to his skill. Fifty, I feel sure, were more or less blind. Scores halted, and several had but one arm. They marched in companies, under standards of impossible monstrosity. Never, never did troops defile comparable with those I saw when, at 3.30 P.M., the thousand Cape Coast warriors marched towards the bush on our left flank. It was not only a hideousness of face, a distortion of limb, a mere unconsciousness of discipline, which struck the beholder;* on nearly all their various

* The class from which the Cape Coast Volunteers were recruited is shown *ex post facto* by the following document:

features sat the imprint of vice, and, above everything, an air of simple, helpless "funk." Very slowly, and in perfect silence, they followed the flags, adorned with lions, pigs, severed heads, and other encouragements to valour. The Kossus, through whose station lay their route, laughed heartily, as did Houssas, West Indians, and even the General, to notice their woebegone expression. But it was too evident that such soldiers would never advance a yard save under compulsion; and the Kossus received orders to drive them on. Very, very slowly the long line

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Judicial Assessor's Court, held in the Beulah Camp, Nov. 14, 1873.

By the laws and customs of this land, every person ought to assist in the defence of his country against its enemies, and if he does not do so willingly, he ought to be compelled to do so. We, therefore, the Judicial Assessor and Chiefs of Cape Coast, in a special court held in the Camp at Beulah, do issue the following orders:

1st. Every able-bodied man not already engaged in the service of his country is immediately to present himself for that service.

2nd. Every able-bodied man refusing to do so, without proper excuse, is to be arrested and compelled to work without any pay.

3rd. Any person engaged in the service of his country who shall be proved guilty of disobedience or insubordination, is to be subject to the punishment of flogging.

(Signed) JAMES MARSHALL, Judicial Assessor.
Chief QUASIE ATTAH, his + mark.
„ COFFEE AMOOAH „ „
„ COFFEE YAMMIE „ „
„ COFFEE SACKEY „ „
„ CUDJOE ASAL „ „
„ EKMO „ „

wound across the open, and vanished in the forest, Kossus running and laughing at their tail. We took station along the flank of our works to watch the result. All morning there had been a desultory fire, mostly of sharpshooters, on either side. Watching their opportunity, the sailors silenced several enemies who had been troublesome on the previous day; and a West Indian, from the church, was seen to drop a warrior who had been particularly obnoxious. No firing came from the quarter in which the volunteers had dis-

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And at their own request signed by

Captain	Quow Arkoon	his + mark.		No. 1.
,,	Quasie Etsin	,,	,,	No. 1.
,,	Quow Assimah	,,	,,	No. 2.
,,	Cudjoe Ekoom	,,	,,	No. 2.
,,	Coffee Mooasu	,,	,,	No. 3.
,,	Cudjoe Tompolu	,,	,,	No. 3.
,,	Quamina Aminah	,,	,,	No. 4.
,,	Quow Kootah	,,	,,	No. 4.
,,	Quasie Amarahiah	,,	,,	No. 5.
,,	Quow Esirah	,,	,,	No. 5.
,,	Cudjoe Afrim	,,	,,	No. 6.
,,	Quamina Sackey	,,	,,	No. 6.
,,	Quamina Karcoom	,,	,,	No. 7.
,,	Cudjoe Akin	,,	,,	No. 7.
,,	Quabina Quah Agil	,,	,,	No. 9.
,,	Quacoe Sankah	,,	,,	No. 9.

We agree to the above:

Chief James Robert Thompson.

Chief John Mayan, his + mark.

Court House, Cape Coast, Nov. 14, 1873.

appeared, but the Kossus sent word that no efforts would make them move from the edge of the forest. At 4.30 P.M. a rumour spread, coming I know not whence, that the Ashantees had fled, abandoning camp, slaves, loot, and furniture. Authentic information came in about 5.30 P.M.

Several parties of scouting Kossus and Houssas, with some hundreds of Fantees, were ordered out at once by Sir Garnet. Joining himself to a number of them, Mr. Commissary Richardson dashed over our hill and down the path so often swept by the fire of the 2nd West Indians on the second day's fighting. How fatal that fire had been was proved by numerous bodies lying in the path, and more certainly by the faint smell that hung on the night air. The Fantees could not be persuaded or forced below the hill, but the Houssas resolutely declared themselves ready to follow the white man anywhere. So Mr. Richardson went forward at a run, followed by Houssas, firing wildly, but not quite ineffectually, into the bush. Of course he was not a bit surprised to be overtaken by Lieutenant Gordon, of the 98th. Wherever enterprise is wanted this officer presents himself. Nine prisoners they captured in a gallant run to Addismadi, all of them emaciated to the last degree. The Kossus also brought in much loot, and several slaves. It was too dark for serious operations that night, and so we went triumphantly to dinner. The fact of our victory is certain. The Ashantee force is utterly split up, hanging

together by mere force of terror. The king's son, Sey Kojo, who relieved Amanquattiah of the command, was killed on the second day. His body is gone to Coomassie. Amanquattiah himself is wounded, and the war on this side the Prah may be considered at an end.

CHAPTER IV.

AN ABANDONED CAMP.

Naval Humours—Slaves Released—Their Tortures and Sufferings—Sights in the Abandoned Camp—Fearful Odours—Our Casualities—The Loot—Amanquattiah's Chair and Bedstead—Return to Cape Coast—Rally of the Ashantees—Fatal Panic Amongst our Men—Firing on one Another—Disarming of the Fantees—The Gatling Gun—Theft at the House—Fetish Trials—Impotency of English Law—Secret Power of the Chiefs—Appeal to the Women—Arrival of Wassaw Deputation—Unwillingness of Fantees to Help Us—Secrets of Cape Coast Trade—Illness of Sir Garnet—Razzia Amongst the Negroes—Incidents of the Fray—My Cook—Disastrous Triumph—News from Captain Glover—Start for the Front—Stupor of Sleep in Negro Children—A Night at Asseyboo—Pleasures of the Bivouac in West Africa—Colonel Evelyn Wood—Akroful—Accommodation there—Fireflies—Rats—The Commander—Kossu Arrogance—Dunquah—History of this Camp.

Cape Coast Castle, November 9th, 1873.

It was about 3.30 A.M. on Saturday morning that the sailors woke me from unquiet slumber on the church top by commencing the operation which they called "washing

decks." These good fellows persisted in regarding their fortalice as a two-decked vessel, with port and starboard quarters: nor could they be persuaded that the siege was not a sort of picnic, kindly devised by their superior officers, in concert with the Ashantees, as a pleasant break in the routine of service. Some of the fo'ksle jokes I heard were smart enough, as when the firing ceased for a moment on Thursday night, and a quartermaster exclaimed,—"Interval of ten minutes, mates; the concert will recommence with the popular air, 'Slap, bang, here we are again!'" But the operation of washing decks, on this morning, was preparatory to a march. Sir Garnet did not desire to keep a man from his vessel longer than needful, and all our naval brigade lay under orders. At 4 A.M., whilst yet the air was dusky, the garrison of Abrakrampa set out. No doubt at all remained that the Ashantees had fled, but, before leaving, I was anxious to behold the deserted camp. By the light of the earliest sunbeams, I descended the valley, so often cleared by our West Indians, and as often re-occupied by the enemy; behind me, at starting, marched my servant and two armed bearers, Fantees; but one of these took an opportunity to slip back before we had traversed a hundred yards of jungle. It cannot be too firmly impressed on Englishmen that our native allies of the protectorate are mere beasts, cowardly to a degree incredible unless one had beheld them, slavish and greedy, and treacherous as, I hope, are no other natives of the world. We have seen now how cruel is Ashantee slavery, and

the officers of this expedition are picked men, humane as well as brave; but one opinion only rules, that the worst fate they could incur is well deserved by the Fantees.

On the brow of the hill, four or five hundred armed men hung around the heaps of worthless plunder, taken from Kossus and Houssas on their return from camp; no words, nor even blows, could induce the Fantees to move from this safe position. I left them there eyeing the loot, which was guarded by half-a-dozen West Indians, and scattering up or down, as an officer, drenched with perspiration, made a rush to send them on. Just under the crest lay the jet-black chief we had brought down by the broadside I told of. One who had not seen it could not have believed that rifle balls would cut a man to pieces in such fashion. He lay supine, with half-a-dozen holes right through him, but the most extraordinary wound was one in the leg, where, as I think, two balls had struck him in a line, cutting clean through flesh and bone, just like an axe. Eight feet from this lay the second chief, and another beyond. I went on into the wood, finding a body from time to time. About two hundred yards from the hill the camp appeared; it seems that the Ashantees only used the village of Addismadi as a place of detention for their wretched prisoners. Several of these we met, escorted by Kossus; if starvation had left them any appearance of strength to run away, they were stapled by the left wrist to a heavy log, which obliged them to support that hand upon their shoulder, but did not

incapacitate them from carrying weights upon the head, as is the African fashion. Most, however, were merely skin and bone, fearful objects of misery; the women, if not young and good-looking, had no vestige of bosom, except a few wrinkles; the eyes of death looked out on us from fleshless brows, with scarcely even a beam of joy to be released. It seemed extraordinary, looking at the tottering gait, the lameness almost universal, and the limbs weaker than a child's, that their inhuman masters had not long since berid themselves of such encumbrances. Not that the masters captured showed much more flesh. As we walked along the broad path cut through the bush, my servant pointed out to me the baskets laden with unripe papaws, bananas, nuts, and all sorts of jungle fruit, and showed me how they had tried to cook the trash in various ways to make it eatable. I saw the marks of teeth and knives upon some of it: one might as well have tried to get subsistence from a peg-top.

We shall probably know in a few days how many men really occupied this camp. Judging from some experience of savage manners, I cannot think the number much under fifteen thousand; I know that the General estimates the force opposed to him between Abrakrampa and Dunquah at twenty thousand fighting men, besides numerous women, children, and slaves. How many of them assembled for the action which, as we know now, was the last effort of despair, cannot yet be told; but the village of Addismadi lies between a mile and a quarter and two miles from Abrakrampa; I

myself, having walked it, consider the lowest estimate most correct. From a distance of two hundred yards at most in the bush, three hundred yards from the church, the brushwood had been cleared away on either side the road, as far as eye could see; the big trees and the shady branches had been left, and fires, still smoking, occupied the ground, one, at least, to each square yard. The Ashantees must have lain in scores upon the ground. Here and there, a lean-to roof of palm thatch had been built, probably for a chief; wherever one of these was found, the rubbishing treasures of barbarous life—the rags, the pots, guns, knives, calabashes, baskets, stools, brass pans, scales and weights for gold dust, skulls and bones of enemies murdered, beads, rattles, bags, ammunition boxes,—all the paraphernalia of savage ornament and war,—lay about in heaps. No doubt at all of the utter rout. About half way to Addismadi, just where the body of a wretched woman lay in the path, such things as these had been thrown down in quantities to make a flooring eighteen inches deep. Probably her fate, by some stray ball, had increased the scare to madness. A few armed natives at that place were turning over the rubbish, and appropriating what they thought valuable. I did not think it necessary to warn them that their plunder would be confiscated and burnt, but the prudence of our General in making this stringent order became more and more evident as I went on. Such an awful stench never man smelt; I know what foul odours grow when masses of black men get

together too thickly, I know too the sickening smell of disease, but it had not been given me till yesterday to experience the dreadful reek of an abandoned camp of negroes, suffering from nameless malady. Ugh ! the taste rises now. It was not the odour of putridity, though now and again a horrid whiff came from the bush,—it was the stench of mere starvation, leprosy, small-pox, and festering wounds, which caused me to retch all the back journey.

At Addismadi I found an escaped slave telling his experiences to a group of Kossus. Learning that he had left his masters only an hour or two before, I promptly took him in charge on the General's account, gave him some biscuits, and hastily turned back. It is said, however, that the camp of the Ashantees extends some distance on the other side of the village. From my miserable slave I learnt that the enemy had fled just about the time of our attack on Friday; they gave out, one cannot tell with how much truth, that a messenger from Coomassie had suddenly arrived at that moment, recalling them to Ashanti. I gathered also that Amanquattiah had been wounded on the first day of fighting, and had withdrawn, no one knew whither: his sedan chair has been captured, and also a bedstead, handsomely carved, which is believed to have been his property. We had heard before this that the Ashantee Generalissimo had cut his throat in despair. The chief command was then taken by Séycojo, described as son to King Koffee, but in reality his brother; this royal personage was killed on the second day, and his

body was forthwith despatched home. The Ashantees, when the panic occurred, broke into two main bodies, one going due north, and one north-west. The order is, however, that every man get home as well as he can, but, if the Akims and Wassaws are not as cowardly as the Fantees, not a human being of the Abrakrampa army will reach the other side the Prah, unless the King send an army to rescue. So ends the first act in the tragi-comedy of this war. It is thought possible, even probable, that Mansu may be attacked by the retreating force, but all preparations to receive this desperate attempt have long been complete. I go thither on Wednesday to watch the episode. Our losses were ridiculously slight; on November 5, we had but one Houssa and one native chief, the latter badly wounded, who asked the doctor's aid; on the 6th, a Houssa, a sailor, severely hit over the eye, three West-Indian soldiers, three Fantees, two of them bad cases, twelve of Russell's regiment, Captain Grant, two West-Indians slightly, and Lieutenant Wells, R.N., burnt in the hand by a rocket. Not a single death as yet, but it is suspected that many Fantees, from ignorance or prejudice, neglected to ask Dr. Atkins' aid. Of the Ashantee loss, little, as yet, is known; about twenty bodies had been found when I left, but the dead alone may well amount to ten times this number; in such a flight, also, the wounded may almost be counted as dead men.

Returning in great discomfort, with the gorge in my very mouth, I met the Houssas and Kossus hurrying out to pursue

under command of Captain Bromhead, the two Gordons (98th and 93rd), and Lieutenant Woodgate. Lieutenant Cochrane, R.N., who was coming back with me in search of troops—his own having vanished!—turned with them. By this time there were scores of armed Fantees prying amongst the heaps of rubbish; with them, doubtless, would have been found Lieutenant Cochrane's deserters, but how to identify any individual amongst the crowd? On the hill I paused awhile to observe the heaps of loot, which were now encircled by hundreds of loafing Fantees, who sneaked near and purloined any article lying apart. Presently, to the general astonishment, an order came to let the pile be ransacked. Greatly disgusted were the Houssas and Kossus at this announcement, and with reason. Everything heaped there had been taken by them, and it is to the credit of these excellent fellows that they made very little complaint when the West Indians had deprived them of it the night before. But now the cowards who dared not gather it were to have all the benefit, for the Houssas and Kossus had gone on in pursuit of the foe. Let me here interpolate a remark: all the arrangements concerning loot throughout the war were as bad as possible. At Coomassie, after we all had been put upon honour not to appropriate anything, a prize committee was appointed at midnight and the palace sacked. Not more than a half-dozen officers heard of it till morning. I myself, strolling about the town with Lieutenant Saunders, R.A., during the day, had found a house where lay abundance

of valuables, all of which were burnt. So with others, no doubt. Had reasonable notice been given, double the plunder might have been won in Coomassie.

At Abrakrampa the loot was of little worth—at least, the loot we saw. It was rumoured that the Houssas and Kossus made the less complaint about losing their booty in pans and cloths, for fear of an investigation of their pockets. They knew where to look for gold, in the dirtiest corner of the oldest Ashantee rug, and, as is whispered, they did not look in vain. But I saw only one parcel of dust discovered, by a West Indian. It might have been worth a pound when shown to me, but as the worthy black went all about exhibiting it, I should guess there would be little left in very short time. Gold dust is not an article for careless handling; it diminishes visibly. Amanquattiah's riding-chair and bedstead had some interest. The former was just an arm-chair, cane-bottomed, and fitted with a footboard, solidly dovetailed on a pole before and a pole behind. The several cross-bars necessary to hold it fast in such a trying position showed most excellent carpentry. In this machine two wretched slaves carried the burly general upon their heads, a weight, perhaps, of 100 pounds apiece. The bedstead was more ornamental. It had head and footboards elaborately carved, and studded profusely with brass nails; the skin of some striped deer formed the stretcher. These articles, with two or three of the finest drums, made trophies for the General. He departed at 7 A.M., riding in a Madeira-chair upon the heads of four stout

bearers. From this elevated position an excellent view would be obtained, if there was anything to see in this dreary forest excepting trees and trees, leaves, leaves, leaves, and now and then a flower. At 8 A.M. I followed from the scene of victory with Messrs. Elliott and Nugent of the Control. We took the road by 'Mprassoo and Battyan, rather a pretty walk. For there had been much clearing along this secluded path, and the Indian cane flourished in narrow fields of blossom. Nowhere in the country do I recollect so many flowers. But the eternal forest backed them at three yards distance even here. There is no refuge from the trees, no open space, nor clear glimpse of heaven, from the coast-line to an unknown point in the interior. Remember that always. In the whole of this war, not one of us beheld the horizon. And thus back to Cape Coast Castle. Every tiny village was crammed with troops bivouacking for breakfast. Verily this is the greatest time West Africa has had since the world began. Very pleasant was it to behold the gratitude of the women as we passed by. They bowed their heads to the ground, with waving of arms, and graceful flourishing of palm boughs, whilst eyes and teeth gleamed with delight.

Nov. 10*th.* Late last night unpleasant news came from the camp. It appears that after we left, the Houssas and Kossus, led by Messrs. Gordon, of the 93rd and 98th, Captain Bromhead and Lieutenants Cochrane and Woodgate, were ordered to pursue. They came up with the Ashantees, about five miles from Abrakrampa, and a brisk engagement followed; one

Houssa was killed, and several wounded, but the enemy could not be forced from his position. Major Russell, hearing the fire, ordered out the Cape Coast volunteers, about 1000 strong, to reinforce the Houssas; with the greatest difficulty these cowardly rascals were driven into the bush, but, before they had gone five hundred yards, they began to fire madly on every side; the returning Houssas and the advance guard of their own comrades came in for a storm of balls, which wrought great mischief, to what extent is not yet known here. No course is open to the General but a disarmament of these levies; they are ordered in to Cape Coast to-day for that purpose, as is believed. For my own part, having seen Fantees at work, I am satisfied that, unless their arms be taken away, some grave disaster will only be averted by prompt measures.

Nov. 12*th.* Another desperate excitement amongst the natives! Another rush from all parts of the town, cloths flying loose, and a hurricane of dust. This time it is the Gatling gun which rouses the population. Once more the rumour has spread that "white man's fetish" is about to take up the war single-handed, dispensing with native assistance. Deceived by the "land-steamer," which now puffs unheeded at its peaceful task of sawing, the Fantees put an undiminished trust in the "pistol-gun." Following the crowd, I presently gain the sea-wall, where Captain Rait, R.A., is instructing a half-dozen Houssas in the management of the Gatling. Before I reach the spot, that peculiar grinding roll which we first

heard in the Franco-German war resounds above the clamour. Every one knows what like is a Gatling gun. The Houssas, who, of course, saw only the beauties of the weapon, turned its handle in ecstasy; their comrades screamed with delight to watch the splash—splash of the bullets, falling like hail into the sea, a thousand yards away. Captain Rait stood beside and "served" the gun, but he already knew that this fetish must be almost as disappointing as the former. The Gatling is not fitted for rough work; its terrible machinery is delicate as that of a watch, and no negro that ever lived could be trusted to work it. In point of fact, there were but two officers, Captain Rait and Lieutenant Saunders, R.A., and no privates, in the expedition, who understood the nice adjustment of the "drum," and they understood so thoroughly as to declare it quite useless for the sort of business before us. A tiny fraction of error in fixing the "drum" disables the piece, and it will bear no ill-usage or accident; in fact, one of our Gatlings refused to "traverse" by the time it was got to Dunquah, and the second, though brought up in good order, was prudently left behind to guard our *tête du pont* at Prahsu. Sorrowfully the Fantees learnt that no fetish at our disposal would enable us to dispense with their aid.

Nov. 13*th.* There is considerable agitation in our quiet dwelling. Mr. Selby was robbed of a cash-box containing £50 in gold last night. Grievous suspicion rests upon the "boy" whose business it is to sweep out the office. The reader doubt-

less supposes that in such a case the police would be called in, search warrants issued, and formal proceedings taken; for does not Cape Coast Castle boast judge and barristers, and law books and briefs and juries? Of course it does, like any other town of Africa, where we have conscientiously established English forms amongst a people which neither loves, fears, or understands them. But not to their powers will the wise man trust in his need, though he have no choice but to pay heavy taxes for their maintenance. To them may the fool or the stranger appeal, but a resident knows better. From puzzled judge, hard bound by rule and precedent consciously to do injustice; from lawyer, semi-savage, quoting words of which he knows no meaning, and formulæ twisted to dishonesty; from jury which understands not its own duties, nor dreams of wrong-doing when it gives false verdict for bribes or personal feeling; —from these the merchant of Cape Coast expects no help. There is another institution in the land which exacts what justice is found there—an institution dreaded, approved, and understood by all—the fetish. To it Mr. Selby applied, not without the English judge's cognizance. He sent to the chief under whose name the culprit professed to live, and the chief sent down two men who carried him away. Whither, and for what? No one knows who will tell. It is only certain that death never ensues, nor is physical torture the means employed to reach the truth. Solitude and silence, dread miseries to the Fantee, are thought to be chief adjuncts in extracting confession, and to these may be added cunning

decoctions mixed with the food and drink. A thinner and a sadder man the culprit returns from his trial if pronounced innocent, but he tells no tale to reach the white man's ear. In Mr. Selby's case, the man so far confessed as to admit having seen the cash-box, and to tell where it would be found, but he persisted in declaring that it was already rifled when he picked it up in the garden or waste land behind the house. Fetish, shorn of its powers by English law, could drag him no further on the path of truth.

My place of observation in the verandah gave me a new spectacle to-day. Mrs. Barnes, a wealthy old lady of the town, has taken council with her peers, and has drawn up a stirring appeal to the women, urging them to turn out in their thousands at this crisis. The manner of circulating this invitation was by means of a crier. Every leading chief has an official of this sort attached to his suite. He is a personage of no small importance, selected on account of a powerful voice and an imposing delivery. In Ashantee, the king's criers, of whom he possesses a number, are distinguished by a *plaque* of gold, worn on the breast. Their persons are sacred, as representatives of the king in Ashantee, and as ambassadors abroad. The same honour attaches to them with the more distant tribes of the protectorate, but here, in Cape Coast Castle, this useful office has fallen into disrespect with other forms and prerogatives of royalty. The necessary result of our introduction of English practice has been the extinction of native authority. The chiefs of Cape Coast hold their nominal

power by very doubtful titles; nor would it endure for a day, though shorn to its present limits, did not the holders exercise a secret and unavowable authority more hateful to the spirit of our law than any subordinate jurisdiction. Of this *terreur blanche* I have just shown one example in the continued use of fetish trials, necessarily permitted by our officials. Is not this the most complete confession how hopeless is the task to govern negroes by English law? But the Cape Coast chiefs have more terrible and more secret ways of sustaining their personal influence. They possess money, daring, and cold resolution, which attributes, if uncontrolled by conscience, will always make men powerful in spite of laws. He who offends the chief, as is alleged, will not long pursue his course of rebellion with impunity. In due time suspicions of crime form against him, a charge is brought, supported by conclusive evidence, and the judge himself innocently fulfils the chief's revenge by sentencing the accused to pay the penalty. To this pass, as I am told, have our civilised innovations brought the public moralty of the coast. It is even hinted that in cases where the chief has been more seriously offended, a quicker, less troublesome, and deadlier means is used to obtain revenge. Your negro, in all parts of the continent, is an herbalist of no mean skill. His medicines are trusted to some degree by all who have had opportunity to witness their results. And his poisons are yet more numerous. It may be urged that our reforms have not gone far enough, that this dreadful abuse will be checked as civilisation progresses. But we can scarcely

hope to lift the African above the level he has reached in Sierra Leone—on his own continent, that is—and what manner of public morality rules at that colony, let him who knows it tell. I repeat common beliefs and sayings when I declare that Cape Coast might learn such lessons as would shock its chiefs from their fellows in Sierra Leone. If these stories be false, it would be more than well that they should receive authoritative contradiction from disinterested persons, not missionaries, nor black pets, but those who have experience to know, intelligence to perceive, and courage to speak truth. If they be true, let England review the work she has done, and the price she has paid for the institution of these horrible customs.

I have wandered from Mrs. Barnes and her spirited proclamation. We first heard of it by the shrill clamour of voices, louder than usual, in the street below. A crowd of children ran screaming past, the boys quite naked, the girls in equal innocence, or protected by an inch-wide bandage. Then the dull clatter of a native bell caused silence, and at the corner of the street a tall and ragged ruffian took his stand amongst the elder members of the *cortége*. For awhile he rattled his ball of wood between two rusty clappers, and then pronounced the words entrusted to him in a voice very high and musical. It enjoined on all patriotic women to assemble next day at the Castle, and undertake a load for the army. They should receive a shilling wages, and threepence for "subsistence." When the ceremony was completed, the children burst again into their clamour, and "rushed" the

street before the messenger, who proceeded to his duty at another open space. The proclamation, I fear, was something very near a failure. Not that the women did not turn up duly; the mistake lay, I believe, in divided jurisdiction.

Nov. 12th. The Ashantees are still retreating in the greatest haste; their advanced guard has shown itself parallel with Mansu, but has made no attempt to use our road; in fact, the fugitives, true to their extraordinary custom of non-interference with our operations, are cutting a road of their own direct to the Prah; but they have sent to Chamah, and other places within our observation, for powder, which will certainly not reach them in any sufficient quantity. The garrison of Mansu is delighted, for the native part, and sincerely regrets, for the English part, that an attack has become very improbable. The result was not to be feared in any case; Colonel Webber, commanding that post, has about five hundred men to defend it, viz.,—fifteen whites, fifty of the 2nd West-Indian regiment, reinforced long before this by eighty more, a hundred and six Cape Coast volunteers of that superior class which dresses in blue and scarlet, and is composed of Mulatto clerks and storekeepers, with two hundred men from Denkera, who will perhaps fight. The position is a camp merely, not a defended town, as at Abrakrampa; the garrison is at present occupied, pending the improbable attack of the Ashantees, with the operation of bridging the Ochee, which runs about fifty yards broad at this point; pontoons are already on their way. Until this

bridge is finished, the road-cutting cannot safely be carried further.

For the last day or two, we have been amused and interested by the visit of three hundred Wassaws, who dwell to the westward, along the flank of the Ashantee retreat. Captain Thompson, of the Queen's Bays, has had great success in stirring the warlike ardour of this tribe, and the deputation which left to-day breathes nothing but flames and bullets against the invader; they have come in, headed by their king and heir-apparent, to procure powder and balls for the purpose of harassing his retreat. I have related before how our Kossus danced and sang, and played fantastic tricks, when they found themselves near the enemy, so will spare the account of Wassaw vagaries; suffice it that the tum-tum to which they danced was adorned with Ashantee skulls, and that a pole, borne in their midst, displayed a trophy of jawbones, once belonging to Ashantee chiefs. The war song had a peculiarity in the chorus of mingled sound, between a sneeze and a cough, which followed each versicle. These Wassaws are the men who deserted Sir Charles Macarthy in his hour of need, but all who are acquainted with them declare that no evil augury should be drawn from this; the panics of a savage army are as mysterious as their likings, and it is beyond doubt that the Wassaws during this last invasion have not only kept the Ashantee out of their country by hard fighting, but have even resisted his bribes. At an early

date of the war, King Koffee sent them an embassy, with thirty pounds weight of gold dust, to solicit an alliance; the Wassaws killed his ambassadors, pocketed his gold, and manned their frontier. Nor have the Ashantees obtained one scintilla of satisfaction for this unkind proceeding; the force they sent to invade Wassaw was driven back, with the loss of seventy men, whose heads and jawbones have lately been paraded about our town. The detachment of our visitors left here this evening, bearing heavy loads of powder and lead. By the bye, I am informed by an officer, who ought to know, that the supply of ammunition appointed for this war is as great as the whole amount consumed in the Crimea,—such a difference does breech-loading make. Of this quantity, one million, seven hundred and sixty-six thousand cartridges have been given to the natives at this date of writing.

The Cape Coast volunteers, who behaved so abominably at Abrakrampa, have, many of them, deserted back to town. The chief himself coolly sent a letter to head-quarters, stating that his return might be expected yesterday. Major Baker wrote him back a few strong words, to the effect that if he dared show his face, he would be treated like any other soldier who had deserted before the enemy. In consequence, the hero retired to Napoleon, about seven miles away. Forty-four of his worthless scoundrels have been recognised by the police, arrested, disarmed, and sent up under escort to Mansu as transport bearers.

Not in all the world, as I fervently believe, are there such cowardly animals to be found as the Cape Coast Fantees. The sense of personal dignity, of manhood, is utterly wanting with them. They are fit to be slaves, and fit for nothing else. I could disgust the reader by the hour with tales of their every-day cowardice, greed, and insolence. We are told that Sir Garnet Wolseley has received stringent injunctions not to proclaim martial law in Cape Coast Castle. If it be so, and if he dare not take on himself to violate the prohibition, I venture to predict that we shall never reach Coomassie. Nothing but martial law, swift and strong, will make these natives take upon themselves the mere semblance of manly virtue. Fight they will not, though certain death were the penalty of the refusal; work they may, perhaps, if a whip be behind them. Not less than two hundred deserters, as is believed, have fled to Anamaboo, hearing that their comrades had been punished by being set to work. There they will live just as comfortably as at home, and no step will the rascals take to help their defenders in this great difficulty before them. Our transport officers will want not less than ten thousand men to carry the needful supplies for an advance. With incredible pains and trouble they can now get five hundred. Where are the others to come from? Every house in Cape Coast, every open space, swarms with lusty negroes, but not a man to work, even at the heavy pay offered by government. Our business cannot be done for want of transport. It may safely be declared that the designs

of the general would be absolutely stopped at this moment if it were not for the women-bearers. What work is done they do, with industry, temper, and comparative good will. But women, from the nature of things, are not to be wholly depended on. The men must be compelled to do their share; and I repeat that the sternest compulsion will be needed.

Since returning here I have been diligently inquiring from all who have means of knowledge, the causes, objects, and probable results of this war. Some very curious facts, quite inconsistent with the general beliefs at home, have been discovered. I can no longer doubt that the professed desire of the Ashantee king to get a foothold on the coast, and so to secure direct trade, is simply a mocking pretext. With his tongue in his cheek he put forth that ridiculous explanation. As we understood it, in all good faith, the king complained that the Fantees of the coast acted as middlemen, refusing the Ashantees personal communication with the white traders. No proposition could be more inconsistent with the facts. The only middle man in the commerce of this coast is King Koffee himself, and he does the agency with a vengeance. The whole interior trade from the outer confines of his dominion, as far as that unknown point where the absorbing capacity of the East Coast merchants begins to be felt, passes through his hands. The *modus operandi* is this: The arrival of an inland trader is signalled from the first village where he touches Ashantee ground; straightway messengers are sent from Coomassie to escort the stranger, and to see

that he does no business on the way; he reaches the king with bales unpacked; the king receives the whole, gives the trader a receipt, and sends half-a-dozen servants, trained to the business, into Cape Coast, with the inventory of the goods detained. They go to work singly, entering every store, and ascertaining the current price both of the ivory they have to sell and the merchandise the king proposes giving them in return. Having gathered all the necessary information they hasten back to Coomassie, and confidentially instruct the king, who promptly values the ivory and cloths of his "guest" at 50 per cent. of the current price just reported to him. He also informs that wretched man what goods he proposes to give him in return, valuing each article at twice the price of Cape Coast Castle. The trader has no choice but to accept. The messengers come down again, as ragged as before, but heavy with gold dust. They fulfil the king's order, doing a small cheat on their own account if possible. The trader is sent away mulcted just 75 per cent. of his legitimate profit. Perhaps at this price he makes a good thing of it, but beyond a doubt King Koffee clears 75 per cent.

The Fantees would as soon dare stop an English man-of-war as a single Ashantee merchant. In the territory beyond our protectorate the hereditary foe will sometimes get illtreated, or so the king declares when he wants a pretext for war; but no one thinks of entering on the agency business. In point of fact, the trade of the Gold Coast is Ashantee trade.

Besides the king's large enterprises which I have described, all his subjects are shrewd pedlars. The Fantees and their allied tribes produce nothing but palm oil and monkey skins. They have rich gold diggings, but they scarcely work them. They have silver, and iron, and copper ores, gums, nuts, timber, and, no doubt, india-rubber—but nothing of these is seen. The trade, excepting palm oil and monkeys, is entirely Ashantee, carried on by themselves without interference from any hand. What then becomes of the want of direct communication with the whites? That Koffee desires to get a footing on the coast is, doubtless, true, but not for purposes of commerce. He wants to extend his dominion, and nothing else. The Ashantees proper are not a numerous race. Probably two thirds of the invading force we have just driven back was composed of tributary allies. The king, however, is perpetually conquering and increasing his dominion. This is done as much by intrigue and treachery as by force. He has established himself as umpire in all disputes of the tribes adjoining, which are not singly a match for one of his great caboceers. By lies and misrepresentations, or by methods even less scrupulous, he keeps them in continual broils with one another, the end of which is always subjection of both parties. I have inquired as to the probability of internal rebellion, in case we should prick the balloon of Ashantee power. Opinions here are not favourable to any such result, though some of the independent chiefs might be expected to rise. It seems that the king is regarded with

a veneration and awe incredible. At his horrid "customs" a considerable proportion of the killed are voluntary sacrifices. It is not to be supposed that slaves alone suffer at the grander ceremonials. The Ashantees, even the chiefs, are massacred indiscriminately, and no man complains.

In regard to the results of the war, no disagreement prevails. Heedless of proposals for peace, the army must push through to the capital, and must hold it long enough to let the most distant tribes of the monarchy perceive that they are conquered. The reader may exclaim that he has heard such warlike counsels in New Zealand and elsewhere, the meaning of which was that plenty of money was circulating and residents were making a fine thing of it. No such unscrupulous reasoning can be charged to the Cape Coast merchants. This war is ruining them. I have said that the trade is Ashantee, our cottons and manufactures against their gold dust and cloths. This exchange being stopped, commerce is at a standstill. Nor do the troops bring any profit. But one contract is out, a risky one, to supply beef to the army. Even this must be carried out in Sierra Leone, for the natives here have no cattle, nor show the slightest intention of raising them. Our other stores come from England. Not even drink is sold to any extent. And when the white soldiers arrive they will literally march from the sea-beach inland, remaining not an hour in Cape Coast Castle. It must be admitted, therefore, that the opinion in favour of war *à outrance* is disinterested, and even opposed to the interests of

those who hold it. They declare that unless Coomassie be occupied the king will find means to deceive his distant vassals, will keep his power unimpaired, or will shortly regain it, and within ten years a new invasion, on a larger scale and better equipped for the work, will again cause havoc and dread up to the castle gates. The power of the Ashantees at present may easily be exaggerated; their wealth in gold dust has scarcely bounds. We know too well that every invention of war lies open to the purchase of any savage wealthy enough to buy it. Already at Abrakrampa we have heard breechloading rifles pinging in the forest, and a quantity of empty cartridges were found in the abandoned camp, mostly of Dutch manufacture. It is only a question of time, when ample means of purchase are forthcoming, to arm the savages of Ashantee with every modern weapon. From the tenure of their empire, from stern necessity as well as inclination, the monarchs of Coomassie will be invaders and quarrellers as long as they exist. On no other conditions will their power hold together. Break up the Ashantee prestige, and the empire built by so many clever savages, by such deeds of blood and daring, will tumble to pieces like a house of cards. Already the wars and massacres of a hundred and fifty years have reduced the true Ashantees to a small proportion of the fighting force. King Koffee, as I have said, is reduced to intrigue and trick where his grandfather would have shown the bloody hand. Make one bold thrust, say the Cape Coast residents, and the hideous giant will fall supine.

Withdraw your hand, and the fates are not more certain than is a cruel vengeance.

Sir Garnet Wolseley has been ill, and is yet confined to the 'Simoom,' hospital ship. We are told that his complaint has not been strictly fever, but "a touch of the sun," incurred on the long march from Abrakrampa. I have stated that his Excellency travels perched upon a chair carried on bearers' heads. Such a situation must, of course, be trying in this climate. To-night, however, the bulletin is very favourable. The news of the governor's illness has stirred a painful anxiety even amongst the natives. Since the days of Colonel Maclean—the man who is abhorred by all sentimentalists as the bluebeard husband of L. E. L., but revered in memory of all folks here as the best administratror ever this coast saw—no governor has established his reputation so quickly, so pleasantly, and so firmly. The most despondent of any good thing to come from hence is shamed and cheered by the General's quick speech and ready laugh, whilst the evil minded, of whom we have abundance, can plead no mistake as to his meaning. Abuses and disorders have vanished almost at sight of him. The right man for this post is Sir Garnet Wolseley; and every badgered transport officer, every merchant, and every right-feeling native prays with special cause for his speedy recovery.

Nov. 16*th.* Sir Garnet appears to be slowly improving, but he is not expected ashore for at least a week under the best

circumstances. The Hon. Mr. Charteris has also been obliged to take himself to the 'Simoom.' Capt. Brackenbury had a sharp but brief attack of fever two days since; as I hear, he backed himself against a despondent doctor to appear next day at mess, and would have won his wager had it been taken. I do not think we have much to complain of just at present in the matter of sickness. The following proclamation was published at daybreak yesterday, and simultaneously the police paraded every street, and seized each man that showed himself:—

Judicial Assessor's Court, held in the Beulah Camp, Nov. 14, 1873.

By the laws and customs of this land every person ought to assist in the defence of his country against its enemies, and if he does not do so willingly, he ought to be compelled to do so. We, therefore, the Judicial Assessor and Chiefs of Cape Coast, in a special court held in the Camp at Beulah, do issue the following orders:

1st. Every able-bodied man not already engaged in the service of his country is immediately to present himself for that service.

2nd. Every able-bodied man refusing to do so, without proper excuse, is to be arrested and compelled to work without pay.

3rd. Any person engaged in the service of his country who shall be proved guilty of disobedience or insubordination, is to be subject to the punishment of flogging.

(Signed) James Marshall, Judicial Assessor.
Chief Quasie Attah, his + mark.
„ Coffee Amooah „ „
„ Coffee Yammie „ „
„ Coffee Sackey „ „
„ Cudjoe Asal „ „
„ Ekmo „ „

And at their own request signed by

Captain	Quow Arkoon	his +	mark.	No. 1
,,	Quasie Etsin	,,	,,	No. 1.
,,	Quow Assimah	,,	,,	No. 2.
,,	Cudjoe Ekoom	,,	,,	No. 2.
,,	Coffee Mooasu	,,	,,	No. 3.
,,	Cudjoe Tompolu	,,	,,	No. 3.
,,	Quamina Aminah	,,	,,	No. 4.
,,	Quow Kootah	,,	,,	No. 4.
,,	Quasie Amarahiah	,,	,,	No. 5.
,,	Quow Esirah	,,	,,	No. 5.
,,	Cudjoe Afrim	,,	,,	No. 6.
,,	Quamina Sackey	,,	,,	No. 6.
,,	Quamina Karcoom	,,	,,	No. 7.
,,	Cudjoe Akin	,,	,,	No. 7.
,,	Quabina Quah Agil	,,	,,	No. 9.
,,	Quacoe Sankah	,,	,,	No. 9.

We agree to the above:

Chief James Robert Thompson.

Chief John Mayan, his + mark.

Court House, Cape Coast, Nov. 14, 1873.

The *razzia* is still going on. About three hundred were caught yesterday, of all classes, for good clothes don't save a man at this crisis. Of these, two thirds failed to show that they were employed on works of public benefit, and forthwith the police marched them off to Mansu with a load upon their heads. But I must give the women of Cape Coast credit for first helping government. The wives and mothers of the town held a second meeting four days ago, in the house of Mrs. Barnes, the wealthy old lady who has thrice seen the Ashantees

at the castle gate, and there drew up a form of adjuration to the younger of their own sex. The town crier repeated it at every street corner the same night amidst great excitement. And in the morning there was a vast muster of women at the castle. It is easy now to understand why the King of Dahomey makes his female subjects his soldiers. I am satisfied that these sturdy women of Cape Coast would fight, as they will work.

But a *levée en masse* is not conducted without some annoyance and some error, as those well recollect who, like myself, had the misery to serve in France during Monsieur Gambetta's reign. To French officials first was given that most excellent warning "*surtout pas de zèle,*" but never was it more needed than by the Fantee policemen. They treated Cape Coast Castle as a conquered town, harbouring suspicious characters. No place was sacred to them, neither the bedchamber, the dining-room, nor that recess which should be the *penetralia* of a mansion, the cook-house. Mr. Selby, taking an early stroll through his private castle, found my new cook engaged in hand-to-hand struggle with police upon the stairs; like Joseph, he escaped without his garment. This group routed, Selby undertook his morning avocations, only to be recalled in half an hour by new altercations: my cook again! again upon the stairs! escaping a second time without a second garment! Coming up for coffee, about 7 A.M., Selby once more detected an invasion of his castle. Behold a big buck policeman pacing up and down his dining-

room, like a sentry on the watch! I, meanwhile, the cause of these innovations, peacefully writing in my sacred place above. Would I had been called upon! Would I had beheld the capture of my new cook! Would I had heard the appeals and protestations by which he obtained Selby's interference! Would I have listened? Never! I would have cried, "Take him, mister policeman, and may he do you more good than he has done me harm, if that be possible! Take him and work him hard, with or without a garment!" This cook I subsequently yielded to the entreaties of the staff. It is not for me to say, but— there was some work for the medicos amongst that estimable body shortly afterwards. *Enfin,* I never saw him more, and justice may have been satisfied.

Some valuable items of news come to hand from Capt. Glover's expedition. Mr. Cleland has been sent ahead to Pram-Pram to meet the kings of Accra, and to lead down their contingents to Addah. The king of Usher town arrived on the 14th, Soloman of Jamestown the next day, and the other chiefs are on the road. The people of Pram-Pram itself, however, are dissatisfied, because they have not been supplied with guns, etc., before setting out. It is not sure they will move. Capt. Glover and his officers are reported to have gone to Ammadekah on their way to Ahwoonah. The people of that country, allies of the Ashantees, are expected to make a desperate stand. The Aquamoos, however, have sent in an application to make an active alliance

with us. This is great news; and if it be true, as I cannot doubt, the resistance of the Ahwoonahs must soon be vanquished, and Capt. Glover will have his rear entirely cleared of enemies in advancing towards Ashantee.

Nov. 17th. I had proposed to start for the front at 4.30 in the morning; my hammock-men and bearers punctually turned up at 6.35. Punctually do I say, under advice, for with the experience lately gained, it seems to me creditable that they came so near the appointed hour. Last night, I chanced to linger when Mr. Selby's clerk, Mr. Gould, attempted to get the house shut up on going to bed. The like of that spectacle I never expect to behold. The boys to whose duty it fell to close the jalousies and lock the doors, slept on mats around the staircase. Gould—he is dead now, poor fellow! dead within five months of his landing in the country!—Gould said to me, "I'll show you something which you wouldn't believe on hearsay!" Thereon he grasped a boy by the heels, dragged him a yard or so, turned him over, and roughly lifted him to a sitting posture; the youth sat up, rubbed his eyes, scratched his head, and went to sleep again as he lay. To another he did the same, with a like result. Having thus got the two alongside, fast asleep, he dragged one on top of the other, and left them a moment; they slumbered placidly in that position. He then ran a-muck at them, being in slippers, and upset the pair, shouting loudly to close the shutters. They both got up, eyes wide open, and apparently conscious; one walked gravely downstairs, the

other retired, with all semblance of reason, to the pantry alongside. The one who went down, came up again in two minutes, still with his eyes wide open, and leisurely lay down to sleep again; the other we found fast snoring in the pantry, on a stool. We took them up, and shook them violently; they rubbed themselves, and went to sleep again. Dragging them into the dining-room, without a word, they silently set about their work, fastening shutters and doors. "Do you think they are awake?" asked Gould. "Tell them to get you something." I did so. No response. I repeated the order. They quietly went back, their work completed, and dropped asleep upon their mats. Fast, stupefied, all the time! Never have I, never I suppose has any man except the traveller on this coast, seen such a thing! It is one of the few amusements of West Africa, to show the stranger how a Fantee boy can sleep. But sleep it is not,—rather a cessation of intelligent existence. No animal sleeps in the same manner. I know my description does feeble justice to the subject, but that night's experience made me regard with charity any after slowness of my men in turning out.

I should think that all readers understand how, in this war with Ashantee, we are bound by the sternest natural laws on every side. Modern campaigning has become almost independent of seasons, but here each day must be counted. By the middle of March, at latest, every white soldier ought to leave the coast; not before the middle of December can

they or ought they to arrive. Sir Garnet Wolseley, by happy dispositions, attacking perpetually here, there awaiting assault with indefatigable patience, has apparently succeeded in clearing out the invaders of our territory. Although the "touch" of the retreating Ashantees was lost within a few miles of Abrakrampa, the camps and villages full of dead, the starving prisoners, and the plunder, seen by a scouting party of the 2nd W. I. under command of Lieutenants Maxwell and Bully, R.N., on the 15th instant, sufficiently show that the rout is complete. Active operations may be said to have ceased for a spell of three weeks, but the most harassing work of this extraordinary expedition only proceeds with the greater ardour. Now is the time to observe how camps are formed in a dense jungle, how roads can be cut in the face of a savage enemy, how depôts are made,—how, in short, it is possible to thrust back invisible invaders, and carry the war in turn through an impracticable country. With the object of learning such matters I set out this morning in my perambulator for a careful survey of our outposts. The first of these, though the last to be fortified, is Asseyboo, to which I have briefly referred in my journey to Abrakrampa. This tiny village stands on the top of a hill, which was once famous for its plantations of banana. When I passed through, a fortnight since, the Ashantees were lying but five miles away; nevertheless, this graceful orchard stood untouched. The mud huts of Asseyboo were closely environed by a circlet of the most brilliant and the silkiest verdure, over which here and there,

towered the cotton trees, grey and gigantic. Now, for a hundred yards around, the bananas are lopped down, and their dead stalks and leaves lie brown upon the grass. But so rapid here is vegetable growth, especially of the *musæ* family, that slender shoots of two feet high are already rising from stems cut down but a fortnight since. Asseyboo lies about two miles from Cape Coast, half way to the great camp of Dunquah. For the last month, convoys of ammunition and stores have been passing daily through it to the front. Until ten days ago, the Ashantees were lying in considerable force within five miles, suffering severely from want of food. No opposition was to be seriously feared by them in swooping down on the village, whilst the plunder would have been invaluable. Yet they lay quiet until Captain Buckle, R.E., relieved from anxiety about the fortification of Abrakrampa, found time to strengthen this fort also by a stockade and trench. From the day of Amanquattiah's defeat, Asseyboo has been a busy place. With that event, Mansu, far to the northward, became a post of primary importance, to be garrisoned and provisioned with the utmost speed: hence the pressing of labourers at Cape Coast, to which I alluded in the last chapter. Within an hour of their arrest by the police, every man who could not show good cause to the contrary, was charged with a load of rice, or beef, or ammunition, and sent on. Gay young gentlemen who had apparently looked upon the war for their defence as merely an amusement devised to please them, found themselves suddenly interested

to the extent of fifty pounds weight. Loud was the outcry, and profuse the weeping; but as all these youths had enjoyed for months past an alternative choice of fight or work, and had selected neither, their own countrymen did not pity them. The women came forward manfully, as usual. At the earnest request of Government, those ladies who possess influence in town held a meeting of native women, when, as I hear, stirring addresses were delivered. In the result, another crier was sent round to stir the patriotism of Cape Coast housewives. And well did they answer the appeal.

Asseyboo as a post is to be abandoned in two days time. The Ashantees are far away northward, and the garrison of marines and bluejackets has returned to shipboard. I found indeed a detachment there, but they were only resting for the night, after a march from Dunquah. The village was full to cramming of carriers passing north or south, or depositing their loads with Mr. Commissary Baker. If that active gentleman could ever be reduced to despair by astonishment and confusion, he would have been speechless that day. Although his orders to "clear out" on Wednesday were too stringent to admit of doubt, stores kept coming in to his address at a rate to demand twenty times the bearers he could hope to raise. Four tons and a half of rice alone did that unfortunate man receive betwixt daylight and darkness, besides beef and pork! With the last convoy came an explanation. Bearers to forward it were to come back from Akroful, the next station. Then relieved in mind, though with direful fore-

bodings, Mr. Baker retired to bed, as cheerfully as might be. The stores had overflowed his little den, and stood piled up in the street without. I made a bed of rice boxes, and lay on the top. Lieutenant Cochrane, R.N., whom I had last seen in the abandoned Ashantee camp, stretched his mattrass and blankets on the floor, and we sought forgetfulness of bile and headache and sun-fever, in sleep. Need I say the night was black as velvet, that the ragged gaps called windows seemed hung with a funeral pall, that the Asseyboo hyena, a well-known beast, screamed himself hoarse in the clearing, and that the *cicalas* sang like charity children? Surely a hint will do. About 10 P.M., our bilious slumbers were disturbed by a soft rustle, which grew and grew as one listened, louder and louder, shriller and quicker, until the rustle became a roar, and the deluge burst in upon us. "Oh then and there was hurrying to and fro," with a vengeance. From point to point I dragged my bed, wading the swamp which once had been our floor. In vain! Mr. Baker and Mr. Cochrane had selected the only spots that made attempts to keep the water out, and there beneath umbrellas they drowsily bemoaned our common fate. Suddenly great commotion in the corner; Mr. Cochrane is chevying a toad which has leisurely traversed his face. The toad is found and pitched through the window. Exclamation on the part of Mr. Baker; a lizard has fallen on his feet. All the foul beasts inhabiting our cracked walls, are abroad, seeking day quarters. We begin to discourse of centipedes and scorpions. I graphically describe that fearfu

creature, surely the most horrible of created things, the West African *tarantula*. General shudders, and sudden wakefulness. I catch a centipede, approaching my bed with undulating wriggle. Eruption of a marine officer, flooded out, come to seek comfort in companionship. The unfortunate sailors are reported to be sitting, stark, upon their clothes, with waterproof sheets wrapped round them. Oh, it was a night to recall those pleasant prophecies we heard in England from stay-at-home gentlemen, who declared the Ashantee campaign to be "a pic-nic." Again and again the flood came down, after a break. The thunder shook our walls, and the lightning——! I want an epithet for the lightning, but no one could supply me who had not visited West Africa.

At Asseyboo there is, of course, no news. My servants report to me that a girl has been captured by Ashantees close by Mansu, and that they lie in great force there. Report disbelieved. The occupation of Lieut. Cochrane and Grey at this port, now unimportant, lies in preventing carriers' escape, and in sentencing those of them who make the attempt. Were not the village stockaded, it would be hopeless to expect the arrival of one half at their destination. The wretches for whom England has made such a sacrifice of treasure, and of lives more valuable than a thousand Fantees, will not even carry provisions for men of their own race up country. It is the grimmest of bad jests that we should be fighting to protect the lowest and most useless of all tribes against the single race upon this coast which seems to be

worthy our interest. The king of Abra himself, and all his chiefs, were sent to the guardhouse last week for positively refusing to follow up the enemy. Without any credit to the King and people of Abra, the Ashantees have been driven from their town, and now they decline to stir in aid of their compatriots. Yet these very men know and declare that unless Coomassie fall, the Ashantees will return in greater force before ten years are over.

As I was preparing to set out for Akroful, Col. Wood arrived, attended by Lieut. Richmond, 50th regiment, who had been ill on board the 'Simoom.' We left in company, along an excellent road. To Lieut. Gordon, 98th, is due the credit of first making the bush path serviceable from hence to Dunquah, at a time when every yard of forest might be expected to contain an enemy. Lieut. Mann, R.E., has completed the work in a most admirable manner. We reached Akroful, a post so often mentioned in this war, after an hour and a half's travel. This collection of huts reaches the size supposed worthy of the title "town." It might have contained, when full, 500 inhabitants, and boasted a church, mission-house, and schools. In the street, as we walked in, were drawn up near a hundred Kossus, under charge of Lieut. Woodgate. More exciting news awaited us than could have been anticipated. The tale of my servants was confirmed with the additional news that a policeman had been waylaid that very day. Col. Webber, at Mansu, had sent word that he thought the road really cut, and begged

reinforcements from Dunquah, who should reconnoitre as they came up. Col. Festing, at Dunquah, passed the alarm to Akroful, whence 50 of the 2nd W.I. were immediately despatched. At the same time the Kossus received orders for a forced march from Abrakrampa, and they proceeded on the journey fifteen minutes after our arrival. I had intended to spend a day at Akroful, to learn the hairbreadth escapes and perilous adventures which, no doubt, live in public memory there; but the news of action to the front urged me forward. Of the town there is nothing to be said. It is built of mud, roofed with palm leaves; its street has a few trees in it. The houses crumbled down are perhaps more numerous than commonly, and the roadway is a little more cut up by rain. Smells much as usual. Inhabitants black, and women remarkably plain. There is no trade to tell of, no industry, no agriculture; nor ever was. The average male creature has no courage, and the average female no virtue. I judge thus of its ethics because Akroful is a sample town in externals. The mission establishment, as usual, has proved a blessing to soldiers. The church is a hospital, the schools a barrack, and the mission house is our acropolis and head-quarters; it is fortified with ditch and breastwork, and the out-buildings are loop-holed. Behind the house is a little lawn, with palm trees dotted over it, and some vestiges, as I think, of a flower-bed here and there. Perhaps the mission lady had a fondness for gardening in the cool hour at sunset; perhaps she took young Africans by the hand and led them out to see the

effect of care and nurture on the feeblest life; perhaps she taught them moral lessons with the hoe, and with a spade dug round their arid souls to plant therein the merits of work and the love of beauty. I fear if that good lady would but tell hard, cruel truths, she must needs confess the moral garden so prepared by precept could never at its best be more like hers than are these weedgrown, trampled parterres like the pretty beds she cultivated. But really I am making too many assumptions. The whilom missionary of Akroful may be a bachelor, with a mere taste for flowers.

I dined with Colonel Wood in a pretty green arbour raised upon the missionary's grassplot. We had meat, both salt and preserved, eggs, ham, and other luxuries, soon to be exhausted. The great, slow, fireflies of Africa blinked at us from the ground, almost outshining our feeble lanterns. Wisely was the arbour preferred to the mission-house, where quarters had been assigned to me upon the table; it was a long table, sacred to the school, I take it, but not large enough, properly speaking, for more than two persons, with their complement of rats. How many rats to a person? you ask. I have no idea how they estimate the proportion. About fifty of the largest size, a hundred smaller, and a thousand of ordinary dimensions—as big as a young cat, say —would be about as near the thing as I can guess it. Rats of a friendly disposition were they, and of inquiring mind; influence of the missionary, say you, of his goodness, and his patient pursuit of education. I should be sorry to think

that any good man's work had been quite lost, and no traces of mission influence are to be observed in human subjects; and yet, a little knowledge is a troublesome thing. I feel quite sure no rat of good nurture would approve the pursuit of anatomical studies from the outside, in a clothed subject, at dead of night. One may foster a love of science without going these lengths. The formation of a negro and a white man is sufficiently alike for purposes of study, and why, when there are a thousand naked blacks outside, why insinuate your inquiring nozzle between an Englishman's shirt collar and his flesh? Why run up his trouser leg? Why nibble his nose? I ask these questions in expostulation, not in anger. It was but a momentary rage which caused me to strangle that young rat in my blanket, and no one can lay to my prejudice the victim I smothered in sleep. As to the behaviour of Mr. Richmond, who flew around with a big stick, and made indiscriminate massacre of these students, I can't be responsible for that. But when the missionary comes back, I hope he will complete the education of the survivors, who would appear to have become demoralised under recent events. So terrible a curse is war!

The Commander turned up again at Akroful. Really this little man appears to be more irresponsible than the General himself. Woodgate took his Kossus through last night, but the Commander preferred to stay behind. At dawn we beheld him swaggering about, his head high up, hand on sabre, and the inimitable strut in his little bow legs. The Com-

mander disdains Wood's uniform, in which feeling he has all our sympathy, for no costume ever was devised so hideous as the white shirt wherewith his brethren are clothed. Much better cling to the neat brown suit which nature gave, with just a red sash about the loins for sake of colour. By the bye, Dr. Reid tells me a funny tale of Kossu arrogance. He came from Sierra Leone with the second detachment of those fine fellows. They were enlisted under the chief of Waterloo, who accompanied them, a grey-haired man. Reid made friends with the dignified old fellow. One day, in conversation, he asked how many wars the chief had fought in. No reply. Reid saw he was offended, and withdrew. Some hours after, the old man came to him leading a youth of twenty years old or so, "Sir," he said, "ask this boy how many wars he has fought; he will tell you. But don't ask a grey-headed man, because he doesn't know!" Thereafter friendship was renewed.

At 6 A.M. we started again for Dunquah, having first administered "two dozen" to a tall Gambia man, for getting drunk and howling us all into a fever. Every effort is made to keep liquor out of the camps, but not with entire success. A brisk trade is springing up amongst the peddlars of the coast, chiefly women, of course, who travel inland with a load of cloths and notions. Police are stationed half way between Cape Coast and Asseybo, to examine all merchandise for drink; but it is easy for women to smuggle where there are no female searchers.

Fantees of the sex have peculiar facilities. From the earliest age they wear a large "improver," of rolled cloth, which increases in size as they grow up, and reaches an enormous bulk in women of rank. The use of it is to carry children astride, but no other race of people have so much need of the article. One can tell at a glance that the Fantees have no Hottentot blood in their veins; much the reverse. In the sacred "improver" a female chapman can carry two or three bottles without any suspicion, and doubtless they do it. The marines, however, are proof against temptation. They have an idea, to some extent correct no doubt, that the fearful loss of life amongst their comrades earlier in the war, was due to drink, and they profit by the warning. Of a hundred and four marines, with six officers, who landed June 9th, but one private and three officers are left to boast that they have never been in the hospital. And the number of deaths you know too well in England. This, however, was on the coast, and during the rains.

The road from Akroful to Dunquah was completed only the day before we went through, and gangs of labourers were still employed in smoothing it. Lieut. Mann is to be congratulated on his bridge-building. There was much swampy ground, and several streams, to be crossed. By the bye, I see it urged in the papers that the military road we make will at least advantage trade, if it do not carry us to Coomassie. To one who has seen it, this happy notion has something very ludicrous. Though a thousand bearers perhaps

pass over the road every day between Cape Coast and Asseyboo, they do not suffice to check the growth of vegetation. No human power, not even the whip, will make Africans walk abreast. They will follow in single file, and they even wind about on our broad track just as if there were obstacles to encircle, as in the bush. In consequence, the sides of the road are already growing up, almost before they have been cleared; and it is safe to predict that unless some novel means be devised to make the chiefs keep our track open after we have gone, within twelve months it will be bush as dense as ever, with a six-inch path winding in the middle. As one goes inland, the trees grow taller, and the undergrowth less thick. Bamboo clumps become more frequent, and lovely little vistas can be seen across some stagnant pool, bestarred with lilies and *nymphæa*, the abode of snakes and dysentery and fever. The camp of Dunquah, always an important post when the Ashantees come down, stands on a hill, seven miles or so from Akroful. Here the Fantees made their single stand against the invaders, as I have told elsewhere. The English occupation of the place began by the detachment of Capt. Godwin, 103rd regiment, who was sent to examine, and to collect native troops. On September 20th, Col. Festing, R.M.A., and Mr. Commissary Lundy, came up with a heavy train of stores, and not one fighting man. Beyond Akroful Col. Festing received a note from Capt. Godwin to say he was expecting an immediate attack from the immense force of Ashantees encamped close

by. Col. Festing returned to Akroful, armed forty of his bearers with the spare Enfields lying there, and resumed his march, arriving at dark. A messenger was immediately sent to Abrakrampa, and another to Major Home, R.E., who had already made his way to Mansu. From Abrakrampa arrived forty-four Houssas, sent back next day. Sub-lieut. Filliter, 2nd W.I. came up with thirty-seven West Indians, and native levies began to drop in. Col. Festing in vain attempted to make the people of Dunquah prepare their town for defence, or even to clear the streets and make it habitable. They refused to do so, even under a threat of burning. The officers then began to clear the hill above, and to build a redoubt; amongst the plucky actions of the war, there are few to surpass that of Col. Festing and Capt. Huyshe, who pitched a solitary tent upon the hill, and slept there by themselves when the Ashantees were expected every moment. Undeterred by threats, the Dunquah people persisted in their cowardice and their filth, and the commandant kept his word by destroying their town after long notice.

As soon as anything to be called a force was collected, Col. Festing followed his instructions to the letter in harrassing the enemy. On Oct. 27th he surprised their camp at Essekaboo, burnt it, and returned triumphantly. What manner of fighting it is when Fantee levies are led against the foe may be guessed from the fact that five officers were wounded in this action. On November 3rd another attack, of which the result is not quite

so well ascertained, though our men had certainly the best of it: Mr. Wilmot killed. Then followed the little bombardment of Abrakrampa, and the hasty retreat of the Ashantees.

At Dunquah there is now a large clearing, perhaps a quarter of a mile in diameter. In the midst is the redoubt, a solid earthwork, protected by a frieze of bamboo stakes. In such an open space an hundred men could defend the post against all the Ashantee army. All round are tents and mat-built huts of bamboo, thatched with palm-leaves. There are hundreds of natives here, belonging to a score of tribes. Kings are plentiful as pickpockets in England. No white troops remain, and but a few West Indians.

CHAPTER V.

HUMOURS OF AN AFRICAN CAMP.

Dunquah Camp—Absence of Vermin in West Africa—No Mosquitos, Fleas, Ticks, B's—Few Snakes—The Morning Parade—Disarming of Levies—Procession of a King—His Intents and Purposes—A Convoy of Women—Ashantee Prisoners—Houssa Recruiting—Colonel Festing—Examination of Amanquattiah's Staff Officer—The Names and Tribes Opposed to Us—Incredible Extent of Ashantee Sovereignty—Movements of the Enemy—The Fetish Tree of Dunquah—Test of Faith—Lieutenant Pollard, R. N.—News of Kings and Princes—Lieutenant Mann, R.E., the Road Maker—Yancoomassie Fantee—Turning out the Villagers—Another Deluge—Ill Requited Charity—Cotton Trees—Mansu Camp and Fort—Captain Butler—Disheartening Account of the Akims—A Night March—Incredible Insolence of Sierra Leone Carriers—Major Home's Reconnaissance—Fortunate Treachery of Guides—Amanquattiah's Brother Captured.

Dunquah, November 21st, 1873.

The confusion of the Gold Coast mails, their unpunctuality, and indifference to the public interest anger the gentlest correspondent. They literally and avowedly come

and go as they please, now a week late, and now forty-eight hours soon. Nor can one blame the captains for this. No subsidy is given them, and the "trade" pays much better than letters. But it is a great nuisance that one should be unable to guess when a steamer is likely to leave. Correspondence is carried on with difficulty and annoyance in the bush, where are neither tents nor roofs under which to write; where the rain it raineth every day like another deluge; where are found neither candles nor lamp oil except one bring them with one; where a man's paper is soaking or else his head is afire. A correspondent does not greatly long to write, sitting amongst centipedes and tarantulas. To take one's notes, to superintend the building of one's hut, and generally to vituperate one's "boys," is sufficient work, as a rule, when a man gets to quarters after tramping all day through the bush. Under such circumstances it is hard to work up rough memoranda on "spec."

Dunquah is by very far the most comfortable of the out-stations, and popular accordingly. I propose to tell something of the scene before me as I write, and the habits and customs of the camp. By 5.30 A.M. the most laggard of us is up and booted. For the rest of his costume it may be as airy as you please, but boots are indispensable; only this morning I saw a field officer taking reports and transacting business in the open air with no other clothing, except a flannel shirt. You see there are no ladies to be shocked by such omissions; but, on the other hand, rightly or

wrongly, we believe that guinea-worms and other plagues lurk in the sand. By the bye, as this letter is designed to be of the order gossippy, I have no compunction in digressing here upon the subject of vermin. Upon this score, Africa may make a boast. The malaria is undeniable, but we have no mosquitos. Fever is a melancholy fact, but fleas are non-existent. Dysentery makes many victims, but ticks harass not. The busy B walketh not by night, nor doth the jigger creep by day. For these mercies we give thanks, nor greatly abate our thanksgiving for the sake of a few sand-flies. Further up the country we hear of mosquitos, but I confess I am not much afraid. If common anywhere, I do not understand why they should be so conspicuously absent amongst these swamps, in the damp, hot weather so peculiarly suited to their maternal needs. Of course you will say that the climate is too bad even for vermin. I'm not going to dispute that,—but be their absence registered. Even the snakes, doubtless abundant enough, and the centipedes, which wriggle out in pairs when one turns up the ruins of a hut, and the scorpions, easy to be found no doubt,—even these pests keep their own places, as a rule, nor intrude upon the haunts of men. I have heard but of one snake entering a habitation, and he sneaked out in a shamefaced manner. I have been nearly bitten by a villainous little wretch that looked like a piece of black whipcord, but it was by the well outside the camp. I don't dispute that the *reptilia* of this coast will bear comparison with those portrayed in Callot's etchings

of the infernal circle, but the common every day pests have no existence. Since Dunquah began to accumulate thousands of natives on its clearing, the houseflies have increased to an unpleasant quantity, but he who has travelled in Egypt, or on the plains of Southern Africa, must laugh when he hears them called a plague: and so much of this digression.

At 5.30 A.M. the last of us springs from his bed of palm leaves, strewn upon a bamboo framework, and cheerily yells for "Sam," or "Tom," or "Solomon," or "Sago." That ragged valet leisurely brings the tea, and then a pipe is lit, and master leaves his dwelling, accoutred as he will. There is a freshness in the air at this morning time, suggestive of anything but fever. From the deep valleys encircling three sides of our plateau, rise mists as dense as water. The mounting sun glides over them, and gilds the lofty trees, the verdant undergrowth, the palms, and snow white boles of *ceiba* on the next hillside. In the long broad roadway that divides the camp, hundreds of negroes squat, clad in the sheet which is their night-gear, and still wearing a turban twisted round their heads. Very graceful and picturesque they look, so clothed. Busy along the line are policemen in blue and scarlet; chiefs, with stool and umbrella borne behind them; and English officers, with the roll-call in their hands. I guess that these are "native levies," just disarmed for conspicuous cowardice, and about to be loaded up as carriers. One of those at the end of the line rises furtively, drapes his white

sheet for running, and glides away. A roar from the quick-eyed officer, a scurry of policemen, and the fugitive is brought back, with the pride of innocence illumining his brow. "Only going to look for his brother—his brother Yarbro, you know!" Of course! The policemen shake him, and the officer growls out, "Next time you'll have a dozen! Tell him so, sergeant!" Feebly that too-affectionate youth returns to his squatting place, and his fellows jeer at him. A pace to the right stands a mess shed, under which two transport officers are busy, counting out small bags of money, all mint-new shillings, coined for this war. In front of them, expectant, stands Company X, of the disarmed levies, waiting for pay. Much happier look these men than that long file of soldiers, still equipped, ascending now the steep. If truth be told in faces, the feeling of every man there is envy for Company X, which has had its fight, has been convicted of cowardice, and has gone through the shameful process which all know themselves to deserve. The advancing company has not yet enjoyed the chance of running away, the result of which is an exchange from free and manly soldiering, at seven-pence half-penny per diem, to happy disgrace and a fifty pound load, at a shilling. The new-comers are followed by their king, an old fat man, wearing ten yards of old brocade, and carrying a stick with silver handle. In rear of him is the bearer of his gun, an ancient tool, and his powder boxes, primer, and slug-pouch, covered with leopard skin. Behind follows a crowd of chiefs and pages, provided with kitchen chairs, and stools,

carved more or less handsomely, from a solid block of cotton wood. The favourite page bears the umbrella; no instrument of gold and velvet, or thick quilted satin, as are the umbrellas of the Ashantee, standards in war, but mere Bond Street articles at sixteen shillings. I know what that king is going to do. He will march to the native quarter beyond the fort, send a string of innocent lies to Colonel Festing, eat a rolley-polley of ground corn, and squat down all his men on one side the road whilst he and his chiefs sit on stools upon the other. So will the day pass; monarch in bursting pride of his authority, and men all silently adoring their commander from t'other side the way. The king will smoke, will drink his rum, and chuckle out fat speeches at an interval of fifteen minutes. The men will listen and applaud respectfully. And king and men will very conscientiously believe when night arrives, that a great movement has been made this day towards demolishing the Ashantees.

By 7 A.M. the sun begins to warm us unpleasantly, and the mists have all dispersed. Nothing more noxious than this early sun. The midday flame is comparatively harmless, though painful. It does not take one long, in a climate where every indiscretion leaves its trace, to discover these fundamental laws. The blacks have now thrown off their sheets and turbans, appearing in short cloths, very tasteful of colour, harmonising exactly with the tint of their skins. This tint, by the way, is extraordinarily diverse, varying from the deepest, glossiest black, to a light brown;—I speak of negroes

pure blooded, of course; the mulatto colour is unmistakeable. In Dunquah camp we have even two specimens of red-headed natives, both girls, and at Mansu, so a doctor tells me, I shall find a man with a red beard, quite hale and intelligent too, as intelligence goes in Africa. I know a child, also, who has grey-eyes, extraordinarily piquant and roguish in his jetty face. None of these anomalies have the slightest connection with the deformity called *albino*. Such poor wretches cannot be mistaken anywhere, their down look caused by weakness of sight, their ferret-like eyes, blotched skin, and colourless hair, marking them for what they are. Albinos too are invariably idiotic in the tropics, so far as my experience goes, and I have seen many in the east, in tropical America, and here. But to proceed, as our forefathers used to observe. Behold a hundred or two of women filing up the hill through that busy crowd around the wells. They exchange merry greetings as they pass with the natives known to them. Each has a fifty-six pound box of ammunition on her head, and I guess they came from Akroful this morning, having marched there yesterday from Cape Coast. You can observe how much better looking they are than their sisters of the bush, features more regular, skins more glossy, and figures more symetrical. Not that the poor creatures approach the most generous limit of beauty. But, as a man may train his power of observation to distinguish varieties of character in fleas, so may a correspondent learn to perceive greater or less ugliness in negro women. Whatever the cause, it may be said there are no

good looks away from the coast. Remark, please, that not one of the disarmed levies, now rolling their turbans into a pad, and preparing for the tramp, utters a word as the long train of women passes by. White men, I take it, would not be so decorous.

The women of Africa pass cheerfully and modestly on, though three-parts naked, to the fort. If you had met them on the road yesterday you would have seen them laughing, singing, and dancing under their burdens. The men sullenly gird up their loins, wrangle over every package, and, if they had courage, would pitch the heavy boxes at your skull. Give us women! is the cry of transport officers. That king of Dahomey who organised the Amazon corps was no unnatural tyrant. He appears to have been a man of shrewd observation, superior to prejudice. Amongst the crowd pass up three Houssas, one jet-black, a serjeant, one the laughing, spirited little bugler-boy, and the last, the thin, wild-looking fellow, on whose lank limbs the picturesque uniform of the corps hangs baggy; who is he? Do we indeed recognise an Ashantee prisoner, the horrid skeleton we saw only a fortnight since at Abrakrampa! It is he indeed, the bugler boy assures me with a laugh, and the present errand of the three is to recruit more Houssas amongst the wretched crew squatting up yonder in their hut. Let us go with them. They pass through the women with a flash of eyes and roll of lips, just such as M. About described in the Turcos when ladies visited their camp at Saarbrück. The men they honour with no glance. But a

month since there would have been black Helens to bewail if the fierce Houssa men had come on such a bevy. But steady discipline, the example of white officers, and the potent word "unsoldier-like," has trained these gallant savages to temperance. Up to the right through the officers' tent, we reach the spot where two or three policemen superintend the labour of such captives as can possibly be asked to work. What hideous misery! Out of some thirty there are but five with strength enough to dig a little drain. One is a grey-haired wretch who feebly grasps a spade with both hands close together, and prods the earth like a two-years' child. One, a youth of fifteen perhaps, lifts a pick—and sits down to recover the effort. The brawny serjeant, a West Indian I should guess, bullies them goodnaturedly, and takes the tools in hand, and smites until the sparks fly. They look on, and listlessly smile in deprecation. I swear they are a ghastly sight, these men more stark than ever was man before—for they are not clothed even in flesh! Bones covered in ragged grey leather are all that is left them of human form. The youth of that boy holding a pick between his legs is told by no freshness of face or skin. He might be thought sixty if one looked at his features. Starvation, disease, and despair, have worn out the lines that nature drew. These are not Ashantees, but slaves. True Ashantees rarely escape the vengeance of our levies, when three or four hundred of them find a wretch alone. Those we have are thin indeed, but quite capable of work or fight, unless eaten up by nameless disease. They are getting break-

fast now, huddled under their prison shed. The wholesome food and water which we give them produces at first a disastrous effect. One half are suffering from dysentery when captured, and these scarcely ever recover. The men comparatively hale break out into dysentery, and boils and all manner of filthy ailments under the improvement of their diet. Nor do they recover flesh in such circumstances, which is not wonderful. The three Houssas are sitting by themselves, listlessly munching rice. A dreary word or two is all that passes amongst the prisoners. The serjeant and the bold little bugler speedily conclude their negotiations. It is difficult to believe that these naked, squalid wretches are of one blood with our stalwart soldiers, so gay in blue cotton and scarlet sash. But their blear eyes light up when it is offered them to fight the cruel Ashantee, late their master, and two of them rise almost quickly to pay a visit to Lieut. Richmond for the purpose of enrolment. Little fighting will they do for many a day to come, but freedom, fresh air, and the hope of vengeance may be their best medicine. I think even that poor fellow left behind, stricken with elephantiasis, may recover, strengthened by that hope.

Beneath the headquarters mess-shed, close beside his neat shanty, Colonel Festing sits, with map stretched out before him, examining an important prisoner. He invites me to hear the man's revelations, for in such a war there are no small secrets. The captive is leaning comfortably against a post, a slender fellow, with gentle eyes and ready laugh. He

is thin, and his black hide has lost its gloss, but he seems fit for anything. The face is distinctly a good one, very intelligent and of pleasing expression. He shows not the least sign of fear; not peculiar in this respect, for real Ashantees never do.

"This is an officer of Amanquattiah's staff," says Colonel Festing, "captured yesterday by the king of Anamaboo. Now, interpreter, ask him whether King Koffee will run away when we go to Coomassie?"

The interpreter translates, but the only answer is an Homeric laugh. He recommences, and the prisoner shouts again. It is evidently a great joke, that suggestion of our visiting Coomassie. Patiently the question is repeated, and at length there is a laughing reply.

"He say, 'What good talking? You never go to Coomassie. No man, not friend, ever go to Coomassie.'"

"Suppose we beat the Ashantees five miles from the Prah, and again five miles further, and again at the Adansi hills, what will the king do?"

"He say, 'You not get a mile beyond Prah before Ashantee fight, and then they fight again, and then again and again, and if you beat them four times they go to Adansi hills and fight again, and then all the Ashantee people fight for their king at Coomassie.'"

"And if we still beat them will the king run away? That's what I want to know."

"He say, 'Where the king run to? He die, and all the Ashantee people at Coomassie.'"

"Has the king much gold?"

The prisoner's answer is an expressive repetition.

"Where is it?"

"In a room of the 'fort,' in a thousand jars one upon another."

"Will he take it away?"

"Where he take it to? You kill king, his gold is yours."

Colonel Festing then proceeded to the more practical part of his examination, and the staff officer answered without hesitation. It appears that the camp of Dunquah, so often worried by our men, was commanded by Essaman Quantah, the ancient general-in-chief of Ashantee, preceptor of all their generals. In this war he gave way to Amanquattiah, his favourite pupil, accepting command of the left wing under him. At Dunquah there were never more than 8000 men, nominally led by prince Benim-Pa, but actually commanded by Essaman Quantah. The other chiefs of that body, if you are curious to know their savage names, were, Eggia-kassi, Enin-katti, and Quassi Dumfi. Our informant knew less about this force than about the right and main body. The former is commanded by Gemoo, King of Mampon, beyond Coomassie; at the crossing of the Prah this chieftain led 12,000 men. Next to him is Poco, King of Bequoi, nearer to us on the Coomassie road; he had 10,000 men at the beginning. The third commander is Attifora, King of Inkoransa, on the borders of the Sahara desert. Thus far does Ashantee power extend. He also had 10,000 men. Great

part of this wing was engaged at Abrakrampa, whence, when things began to look a little black, King Gemoo and his force were sent ahead to cut a by-road to the Prah, to which foresight the army owes its salvation. The main body, also at Abrakrampa, is commanded by Amanquattiah in person, and consists of the forces of Boatin, King of Admutin, Yina, King of Antoi, and Juma, King of Ajunta. Whatever it numbers now, it once could boast about 30,000 men. The entire army crossed for invasion came to 70,000 warriors, by our prisoner's report, which agrees with the Fantee computation, and is thought probable by Sir Garnet himself. At Abrakrampa we were confronted by all that remains of this formidable number, for Essaman Quantah marched in during the second day's fight, but his men took no part in it. Amanquattiah attacked contrary to the advice of all his captains, amongst whom the old Field-Marshal was most urgent in dissuading him. They were conscious of our sailors' presence, and reminded the General of his own imperative direction issued after the disastrous affair at Elmina, never to face white soldiers in the open. But he was obstinate, having sworn by the great oath of Cormantin to "plant his umbrella" in Abrakrampa. This oath of Cormantin recalls the disastrous ambuscade in which the great king Tottai was killed, with the flower of his nobility, early in the last century: *Meminda Cormantin,* Cormantin Saturday, though amply avenged, became henceforth the most sacred of their many oaths. Our prisoner had fought at Abrakrampa, and we endeavoured to get

from him some idea of the loss. He could not deal in figures, explaining that Ashantees only counted the death of chiefs as loss. In the battles of Dunquah, and the many other affairs we have had, he declared there was no disaster at all, meaning no great chiefs had fallen. But Abrakrampa and Elmina are likely to become oaths in Ashantee, so great was the destruction of head men. From the accounts of officers left in garrison at Abrakrampa, there must have been the most terrible mowing down of warriors. The bush is full of dead, who had crept from the road to breathe their last; amongst them many chiefs of note. Lieutenant Allen, R.M., tells me that the other day he came upon a curious spectacle in wandering about. Upon a handsome bedstead, carved, and ornamented with brass nails, lay a festering body, covered to the chest by a silken cloth. Beside it was an open grave, in which, no doubt, the body was to have been placed. All round lay guns and tools, abandoned by the gravediggers in their hasty flight. By the bye, Mr. Gordon, of the 98th, says that the Ashantis, in the action beyond Addismadi, gave way not an inch until his Houssas had spent their ammunition and were obliged to retire; then the stampede began amongst the natives, and one Houssa was trampled to death. Mr. Gordon and Mr. Cochrane, R.N., narrowly escaped the same fate.

Our prisoner has no secrets, and I can scarcely doubt that he would join our force on sufficient inducement. He says that all the guns of Ashantee are across the Prah, leaving

only bows and arrows to defend Coomassie. The invaders are terribly short of ammunition; and these facts make it doubly vexing that we have no means of heading them. There is, however, an abundant supply of powder and lead at the capital. He acquaints us, too, with the manner of fighting by which such an astonishing fusillade is sustained. The men are divided into companies of twenty, who advance to fire and run back to load alternately. This, I understand, was the great discovery in tactics which gave Essaman Quantah a fame equal to that of Moltke in these regions. The plan of the enemy, we are told, is to pass up the side track cut by King Gemoo until past the furthest posts of our white men. They will then strike the main road and cross the Prah at Prahsu, as in advancing. If they should find the whole road occupied, which, unfortunately, is not possible, they will strike westwards, cross the Ofim, and rendezvous at Induardsoom, a town lying eastward of Abatra on the map, north of the river and Prahsu. To reach it, both the Ofim and the Prah must be crossed; but the fords are known to them, and no enemies need be feared on that track. Much other information our prisoner gives, freely and smilingly. It is thought advisable to send a man so well informed to the General himself, and two Anamaboo warriors are ordered to escort him, with dire injunctions against doing him injury. But loud shouts from the mess-shed warn me that breakfast is ready, and I leave our courteous Colonel to perform his many duties.

The most curious sight of Dunquah is the great fetish tree, now prostrate. Many a rood it covers, lying across the Mansu road. When the Ashantees camped here, after their successful battle with the Fantees, they suffered from dysentery to an extent that caused a dangerous agitation amongst the troops. The fetish men were threatened with death unless they could devise a remedy. At length the oracle spoke, and ordered that this vast tree should be cut down. One cannot but think that the fetish men proposed a trial which they believed to be beyond Ashantee execution. With axes and saws and patent wedges, it would be no play for English woodsmen to fell a trunk sixteen feet in diameter, supported by buttresses four or five feet broad; and well may the prophets have concluded that Ashantee knives would never succeed in cutting through the mass. Once more, however, the force of numbers and of perseverance achieved a triumph. For fourteen days and nights the army laboured at this tree, until it fell,

> "As falls on Mount Avernus,
> The thunder-smitten oak;
> Far o'er the prostrate forest
> Its giant arms lie spread,
> And the pale Augers, muttering low,
> Gaze on its blasted head."

Thus, doubtless, did the Ashantee fetishes gaze at the fallen tree. But history does not tell whether its destruction had the desired effect.

The Marines are dropping ill very fast. Two of them have gone back to-day, 21st. They are shamefully destitute of necessaries, in a climate where luxuries are almost requisite. I am living in an excellent hut with Lieutenant Pollard, R.N. He came hither from Abrakrampa, recalled to wait upon his proper king, Chiboo of the Assins. Mr. Pollard made the great mistake of showing himself shrewder than his superiors. Stimulated as to his wits by the most imminent danger, he first discovered and announced that the Fantee levies were absolute cowards, lazy moreover, and not too well affected towards us. In no long time, under a course of the same education, superior officers re-discovered the same facts; but meantime, poor Pollard had been bullied and blamed and recalled from Abrakrampa just at the time when his indefatigable courage and perseverance were to be rewarded by victory. King Chiboo is just now well to the front, but Pollard is detained here, superintending various works. He takes things patiently, feeling sure that in no long time Chiboo will save him the march to Mansu, by rushing back as hard as the royal legs can go. The works to be attended to are various stockades, huts, etc. One very big enclosure is for the use of carriers. At present they are marched into the fort overnight, and kept there under fixed bayonets. But Pollard's stockade will be as serviceable without the sentries. It is built of great bamboos, standing ten feet high, and close as they will fit together. What a pleasant war is this, where you must lock up your friends but may leave your prisoners

running free! In digging the foundations of the stockade, many bones, chiefly of skulls, were found. They are said to be remains of those killed in the great battle; but as I cannot hear that more than two Fantees perished therein, I don't believe that story. The king of Winebah, some of whose men distinguished themselves by running away with particular dash at Abrakrampa, has led in the "balance" of his heros this morning. He is a little fat man, speaking English well. He says he has pursued the Ashantees a great distance, finding many empty camps, but his provisions failed him, and he and his men nearly starved. Colonel Festing had sent a number of carriers with food for this force, but the king declares it never reached him. The King of Anamaboo came in yesterday; he reports many valorous actions, and the capture of much loot, with which he has entrusted his brother monarch, Chiboo. Mr. Pollard is in hourly hope of beholding that sovereign also in pursuit of his fellows. Mr. Commissary Elliot, Dr. Fox, Lieutenants Fitzstubbs and Graves have arrived from Mansu, and this reinforcement of good fellows certainly makes of our little party a crew as pleasant as ever camped in forest. The permanent officers of Dunquah are only Colonel Festing, Sub-Lieutenant Filliter, 2nd W.I., and Mr. Commissary Lundy, but they have always a crowd of guests.

Mansu, November 23rd, 1873.

The alarm at the front has entirely subsided. Guided by the information of that prisoner whose revelations I de-

tailed in my last letter, we can clearly understand how it arose. The Ashantees, retiring along our left flank, pushed out scouts to ascertain how far our posts had advanced. They speedily discovered that Mansu was impregnable to any force of theirs, and hastily withdrew to their uncomfortable track through the bush. Most unlucky it is that in the few hours of their reconnaissance they came across a policeman and a young girl, the former of whom was murdered and the latter carried off. The enemy having vanished again, Colonel Wood made more leisurely arrangements for advancing. We left Dunquah at 3.30 P.M. yesterday. The start should have taken place at 1 P.M., but some mistake was made in notifying the fact to Lieutenant Filliter, 2nd W.I., who acts as staff officer to Colonel Festing, and for once there was a hitch in the transport. By the order of some gentleman unidentified, the Anamaboo men, who had passed a fortnight in the bush, and really seem to have done service, were paraded to carry the baggage. Very discontented they looked, and with reason. Colonel Festing inquired why his single corp of fighting natives should be selected to do duty as bearers, and then it appeared that Mr. Filliter had not been informed of our departure. The Anamaboos were dismissed to their guns straightway, and the camp swept of its idle and useless inhabitants. In a short time the road was lined with negroes fit for nothing but to carry, and we set out. Lieutenant Mann, R.E., had not yet completed his bridges and works more than three miles beyond Dunquah, but the bush

path cut by Lieutenant Gordon, 98th, is still tolerably open. A track does not become overgrown here as it does further south. The forest is too high for brushwood or grass to spring with freedom; but, on the other hand, rain is so constant and so violent that the path is filled with water, and swamps abound. Cheerfully we trudged in the shadow of monstrous trees, and through great plantations of banana. With every mile beyond Dunquah the forest became more open and more shady, until all parties agreed that if no thicker jungle is found at the Prah our English troops will give a terrible account of the Ashantees. In fact, there are English coppices almost as dense as this terrible bush when once you get beyond Dunquah. This does not surprise an old traveller. It is quite evident that unless those plants which make the undergrowth of a tropic's forest can get an ample supply of sunshine, they will not grow. Where the timber has been allowed to reach its height one may walk almost in comfort through the very bush. The Malay name, in fact, for such ancient woods is *Kampong*, town or street. Where the trees have been cut down for the purpose of making plantations, there a million seeds that lay and rotted in their gloom spring up like Jonah's gourd. All round Cape Coast the land has been cleared periodically, and the trees never gained a chance to shut out the sun. Hence the impenetrable bush which surrounds it; impenetrable indeed, but not more dense than Eastern jungle under similar circumstances. Here, beyond Dunquah, land has not such value, nor does it support

a thick population. It remains to be seen whether clearing has been carried to any extent along the Prah. The probability is that it has not, and, if so, our task will be greatly simplified.

Travelling through perpetual mud, and crossing many hollows filled knee-deep with rotting water, we pursued our march. Four miles from Dunquah the rain which had been threatening all day, came down in sheets. In a moment, those who had no waterproof were wet to the skin. Daylight only lasted us as far as Yancoomassie, when a halt became absolutely needful. A flourishing village here had been destroyed long since by the Ashantees; its roofless walls were overgrown with creepers, and wild cucumbers. Bushes five feet high bowed their heads to the torrent, springing from the floors. Such is every village between this and the Prah a haunt of serpents and wild beasts. In an open space near by, a hundred or two of inhabitants, returning under our protection, had built lean-to's of palm branch and plantain. These poor folks we ruthlessly turned out into the night and rain with a shilling per family as compensation. Such is the cruelty of war! But the commiseration of the charitable would be quite thrown away. I never saw more enthusiastic joy than was exhibited by those outcasts when paid their shilling and pushed into the rain. Whither they went I know not, but be sure they had a refuge handy. For us, those who were not troubled by ants enjoyed delicious slumber on a mud floor, with fires blazing at each corner of

the shanty. I except only the four marine artillerymen brought up to run the 7 lb. gun in charge of Major Home, R.E. These poor fellows formed part of the force brought up to Abrakrampa by the General when he came to our relief. In that sudden emergency they were ordered ashore without a change of clothes, a tent, or a waterproof amongst them. The intention was to send them aboard again within twenty-four hours, but the exigencies of the situation required them to be detained. There are fifty of them at Dunquah, without a bed, a pillow, or a shirt to change. No wonder they are invaliding at a terrible rate, although the diseases of the bush are less serious than those of the coast line. People in England will of course put down to the climate any evil that happens, where simple neglect is the cause. Of the four unfortunates accompanying us, one had a borrowed waterproof, one a borrowed shirt, and one a borrowed great-coat, to sit in whilst his clothes were steaming by the fire. To the fourth I lent a dry shirt, and, with sorrow more than anger, I confess that to recover that garment prayers have as yet proved unavailing. At 2 A.M. the bugle called us to resume the march, but it was long after 4 when the start took place. The track was even wetter than before, and several rapid streams interrupted it. The bush continues to grow thinner beyond Yancoomassie, and the trees increase in height. Most charming bits of scenery open along the path, when the dense morning mists have vanished. There are indeed, no clearings, except around the

frequent piles of ruin, but from the top of many a rise we could look down upon the most luxuriant valleys, a mass of tree-tops closely pressed together, surmounted by the giants of the forest. Though the earth be less encumbered by bush, the crush of foliage is astonishing when looked at from above. Lianas and parasites, many of them in blossom, bind all the mass together, and wind their slender arms triumphantly above the highest bough. I saw trees loftier than our tallest poplars, not twelve inches in diameter at base, so eagerly have they struggled upwards to the sunshine. High above all towered the cotton-trees, monsters of the forest. Easy to see by their smooth trunks, scarce buttressed, though supporting such mighty boughs a hundred and fifty feet above the earth, that nature fears no hurricane in this climate. Their Mexican brothers can lodge a family in each chamber round their root. Then there were bamboo swamps, where grey twilight reigns at noon, so ponderous is the vegetable arch above your head. But nowhere any sign of life, except the small lizards hunting flies on a ruined wall. Once, far in the distance, we heard a loud, metallic cawing, said to be made by birds. And yet this was once a great hunting ground, from whence came numbers of black monkey skins, and parrots, and mongooses. But where the Ashantee goes, "Murder is in his van, with Fright combined, and Famine's fevered form and Solitude behind."

A long march it is from Yancoomassie to Mansu, though the distance is put officially at thirteen miles. Both of these

are intended to be halting places for the white troops in their march up. The spots at present selected are:—Aquapim, about eight miles from Cape Coast Castle, whither our men will march straight from the beach; thence to Akroful, about the same distance; thence again, passing Dunquah without a halt, to Yancoomassie; thence to Mansu, Akrofoom, and Faisoo. Beyond this point no selection has yet been made, of course. At Aquapim and Mansu, the enormous huts intended to shelter them are already complete, or nearly so. The halting places have been selected by the Sanitary officers, guided by local advantages.

At 10.30 A.M. we reached Mansu, and found the Commandant, Col. Webber, 2nd W.I., laid up with fever, but not severely ill. Mansu Camp stands on a hill, surrounded by a broad clearing. Its citadel is fortified by a deep ditch, most excellently cut, and a palisade of bamboo stakes. Major Home, R.E., the designer of it, boasts that no Ashantee force could get in, or if in, could get out. If he have thorough confidence in his own fortification, it would obviously be desirable to offer Amanquattiah every facility to enter the trap. This strategical proposition, however, does not find favour in Major Home's sight. Whatever the theoretical advantages of Mansu redoubt, it is certainly strong enough for its purpose. On either side of the large parade ground before the fort, stand most excellent huts, built of split bamboo and roofed with palm and plantain. Those on the left hand can

accommodate eighty men each. Mansu has never been attacked, but for some days past the Ashantees have been heard in the bush along our left; they are now lying in a big camp only $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles from the path. There is very little sickness, though this place is extraordinarily damp. All experience leads me to believe that with comfortable houses, good food, filtered water, and a reasonable care of oneself, Europeans could live in the African bush with scarcely more risk than in any other country of the Tropics. It is the coast line, the water, and recklessness that has given this quarter of the world such deadly eminence.

An hour ago Captain Butler made an unexpected appearance. He was deputed a month since to raise the chiefs of Akim, who lie to the Eastward of our track, and are heriditary enemies of Ashantee. I am sorry to say that Captain Butler confesses himself to have failed. With the limited means at his disposal, he could not compete with Captain Glover, whose profuse liberality has stirred all the tribes around to most astonishing activity. In calling Captain Glover profuse, I am not at all censuring, or even criticising his conduct. The proof of a policy is in its result, and the chief of our Volta expedition is certainly justified by his success. All Akim appears to be in motion towards Addah. Captain Butler could not even get a hearing, except by a handsome bribe to the second chief. When he obtained an audience, things were not more advanced. For the second king only observed, "This is the white man's war now.

We had our fight in June and were beaten." So shameless are these negroes. The first king had actually set out for the Volta before Captain Butler reached him. At the same time, however, it certainly appears to the non-professional eye, that the Akims might have been much more useful to us on this line than to Captain Glover. But the report of Captain Butler is more discouraging for his estimate of the Akim warriors, who had been thought quite equal to Ashantees. Everything is summed up when he declares that the Fantees are better men in his opinion. Capt. Butler, however, may be misled by appearances. There is no doubt that the Ashantees respect the Akims, and the Akims only, as a worthy foe. They never approach their territory, scrupulously keeping to the East of it ever since a disastrous battle many years ago. Captain Butler was taken with fever in its worst form during the voyage, when fifty miles of bush separated him from the nearest white man. I am happy to say he is getting over it.

Akrofoom, November 24th, 1873.

I am writing from the furthest post, the extremest front, of our army. Akrofoom lies about ten miles north of Mansu, the point which we have been used to consider as synonymous with furthest outpost. I came up to-day under great excitement. On arrival at Mansu late last night, the hint was given me that Major Home, R.E., in command at this place, proposed to attack the Ashantee camp at day-break.

2.30 A.M. saw all Col. Wood's force astir, and we actually got away within two hours—extraordinary quickness in Africa. But without Fantee carriers, who had all run away, in the lightest order we set out, but, unfortunately, our progress was not so satisfactory. About half a mile out, three ruffians of Sierra Leone, carrying baggage, conceived the idea of resting awhile. They accordingly put down their loads in the bush path, and sat on them and lighted pipes. The soldiers behind, Houssas, unable to see beyond the next man in file, so dark it was, naturally concluded that the carriers halted by order, and they also stood. So did all behind.

After half an hour, the officer of the rear-guard sent forward a corporal and two privates to ascertain the cause of stoppage, when the three Sierra Leoners were found comfortable and asleep upon their burdens, whilst Colonel Wood and the main body were marching on two miles ahead. I conceive that those men deserve to be shot; had it not been for the treachery I shall presently detail, Major Home would probably have needed every man he could raise. Colonel Wood, when daylight came, found himself divided from half his men by a two-mile gap, and the Ashantees in force a mile from the track. There are a few officers in the English army who would have punished those men, so that all who saw should remember it. In the Prussian, or any other service, they would have died then and there, but the dread of Exeter Hall is an abiding shadow over our officers; they would rather risk their own invaluable lives again and again,

than run the risk of encountering the Evangelical groan; and so these ruffians of Sierra Leone got off with a reprimand, and we poor white wretches had to trot at six miles the hour, in an African sun, to catch the vanguard, in which attempt we never succeeded. The track was very wet, great part of it being actually in the bed of a stream.

These night marches are the most weirdly of experiences. By light of a candle end, in the filthiest of lanterns, we turn out. But one corner of the great bare hut is feebly brightened. The bamboo bed along each side stretches back dimmer and dimmer, till lost in utter blackness. At the further end, a dull red glow of last night's fire; circling mists of damp between; fantastic figures crossing and vanishing. Then, when the toilet is complete, out into the dense black night. No stars shine through the fog. In devious gyration round the camp, move bales of illuminated vapour, in which is seen no central light, nor figure of the man who carries it, so thick and heavy is the air with moisture. These moving halos converge to the parade ground, and gradually form line. Weapons glimmer. The pile of baggage is lit up by concentration of the lanterns, and white-robed carriers sneak from the darkness into light, intent upon securing the easiest load. Officers hurry up and down, shouting, explaining, and reviling. A dozen alterations must be made at the last moment, for what has been commanded is not done, and that which has been done was not commanded. After an hour of dreary waiting, we move off, a lantern carried close to the ground

between each four files. We go in single line. The men are numbed and silent with the cold. Their feet make no sound on the moist earth, their accoutrements scarcely rattle. Like a dim procession of ghosts we wind among the trees. Leaves and reeds glimmer for an instant in red light, then vanish, then reappear, as the low lights swing round, velvet blackness hangs overhead. We traverse zones of faint and sickly odour. There is no perfume in the Afric night, but smells of swamp and fetid fruit hang on the air. Black streams of ants, bristling with legs and antennæ, traverse the roadway, causing our barefoot soldiery to stamp and swear in an undertone. Ants never seem to sleep. Through all the hours of the twenty-four those columns will not cease to travel. The grey dawn comes, so slowly, through the trees. The black mists whiten their curling crests, and mount and mount, until they hang, a mere film, amongst the tree-tops. Then the sun, unseen, casts level rays above our head. The last lantern is extinguished. Swiftly the light creeps down, until the sparkles of sunshine flick us in the face. The day is begun, and the burden thereof.

Major Home, meanwhile, had left his camp at 6 A.M. when we ought already to have joined him. He went nearly due west, and very shortly found the Ashantee position; several abandoned camps were passed through, under the guidance of twenty Denkera scouts; a few straggling Ashantees, mostly slaves, were caught or killed. Then the party divided, some returning towards Akrofoom, and some

pushing on; the Houssas and our precious Kossus were amongst the indefatigables, of course; so was Major Home, Captain Butler, and Lieutenant Woodgate. Captain Huyshe returned with the West Indians. They got in about 10.30 A.M., and reported that the Ashantees over against us had been but 2000 men. At mid-day, Home and his men tramped in, with mud to their waists, and wringing with perspiration. Quite by accident, and against the directions of their guides, this party had stumbled on the real camp; the Denkeras had been afraid to take them there. Perhaps it was lucky,—for the great camp, cleared to a quarter mile width, took three quarters of an hour to march through; the huts stood thick as in one of our posts, and the signs of habitation such that Major Home and Captain Butler both estimate the number of Ashantees at 10,000 to 12,000. Perhaps it was as well our 200 men did not find the nest until the birds were flown, for, to tell truth, the enemy seem to be frightened not a bit. In vain have we fired volleys from the Snider, rockets, and shells, and cannon; they are brave and bold as ever, only they want powder. As the Houssas marched into camp, the sick and retiring fired into them; three Ashantees were killed, and three captured. Amongst them was a hideous wretch, stark naked, whose face had been eaten away by *lupus*. He is said to be brother to Amanquattiah, but bears little likeness to that proud and magnificent chieftain. Brother by a slave woman, I should think; but perhaps even the great Ashantee General would look

mean if stripped and a prisoner. A Fantee slave and his wife were captured. The woman had one of her legs slit down from knee to ankle, and the man had lost both eyes. These mutilations were the punishment for an attempt at escape. From the prisoners one learned that Amanquattiah himself had commanded, leaving for the Prah only yesterday. He has eight wives with him. A first party from this camp had already gone the day before. Had the Denkera guides led Major Home right, he must have found the entire rear guard of 3000 men in camp, and a desperate fight they would undoubtedly have made. I venture to predict from what I see—not a bit from what I hear—that our soldiers will find very stiff work beyond the Prah. It is seldom a correspondent should prophecy, but I wish the public to make no mistake. There is going to be a fight up yonder, perhaps six fights, or more still; 2500 Englishmen and West Indians against 60,000 savages in the bush, men brave as could possibly be, fearless of death to a degree only explained by their horrible customs. We are going to make that fight for the sake of the most cowardly and useless race, even of Africa,—people such that one does not even count their levies as fighting men; and those killed in the victory we gain will be of the only people of the coast on whom some progress, some hope, may be expected. But of fighting on this side the Prah there is an end; Major Home, at Akrofoom, had the very last chance at the foe, and was betrayed, of course, by the cowardice of his Fantees.

CHAPTER VI.

A PAUSE IN THE CAMPAIGN.

The Check at Faisoo—Loss of Baggage—Lieutenant Pollard's Escape—The Truth about Addismadi—Restored Courage of Ashantees—The Return March—Death of Lieutenant Grey, R.M.—Heavy Rains—Captain Rait, R.A.—Our Cannibal Recruits—Their Customs—The Three Cannibal Ju-jus of Bonny—Wealth of Ornament in Cape Coast—Skill of Natives in Medicine—A Fantee Hair Dye—Filliter and his Hammock Men—Visit to Elmina—A Vision of Fairyland—The Castle and Town—Captain Helden—Slave Questions—Ashantee Oaths—Arrival of 'Himalaya' and 'Tamar'—They go for a Three-Weeks' Cruise—Our Scouts Reach the Prah—Captain Buller's Visit—Review of Ashantee Prisoners—Start for the Prah—Akroful—The Fight of the Doctor and the Tarantula—Desperate Engagements—Final Triumph of the Doctor—Appearance and Character of the Tarantula—Other Spiders—An Unknown Species—Roadside Camps—Diseases of Women—The Sutah Lily—Life with Captain Fowler—Ashantee Camps—Barraco—Assin Burial-place Plundered by Ashantees.

Cape Coast Castle, December 1st, 1873.

Pushing out a reconnaissance on the 27th, with about 200 men, West Indians, Houssas, and Kossus, and a mob of natives, Col. Wood came upon the rearguard of the Ashantees near

Faisoo. They retired, fighting, a distance of about three miles, until reaching the camp of the main body; into it dashed Colonel Wood, the Ashantees vanishing. In a few moments a startling fire issued from the bush, in front and on both flanks; the cry arose amongst our men that they were surrounded, and, indeed, they would have been in a very short time. The order to retire was given, very unnecessarily. For our black *protégés* had not awaited it; their brilliant intelligence outran the Colonel's phlegmatic reasoning, and had overpassed its conclusions. "Retire," said the white protector; but the black protected had cried "Bolt!" several minutes before. An energy in action they displayed worthy this quickness of thought. To see a Fantee running away from an Ashantee is to see that brother man and fellow-subject at his very best. What speed, what agility, what endurance does he display! The heat affects him not, rivers stay him not; beneath his feet might an earthquake roll unheedingly away. "Winds wherein seas and stars are shaken might shake him, and he would not"—stop. The King of Chiboo lately set forth to battle with the invaders of his hearth and home; much spoil of rags and bones took he in camps abandoned of the enemy. A fortnight he pursued the retiring foe; but never, never, could his daring fellows catch them up. Heads and captives he forwarded to Dunquah, with the most cheering reports of progress; the captives were all slaves, women and boys only fit to show in a fair as living skeletons, but real Ashantees should be

brought in immediately, for they were but twenty-four hours—but twelve hours—but six—but three hours ahead. It became evident to Colonel Festing that the Chiboos must shortly overtake them at this rate. The same calculation worked itself out in the King's mathematical brain, and very grave grew he. To sack abandoned camps, to catch and behead poor slaves, were pleasant occupations, but to interfere with real live fighting Ashantees presented itself to the monarch's mind as an act unworthy of Fantee civilisation. But halt he dared not. In this dilemma his subjects proved themselves deserving; one bright day, as they tramped with dire misgivings through the bush, making a fearful noise, no doubt, with drums and horns, around the heads of two poor wretches captured on the march, there was a halt in front, a murmur, a simultaneous discharge of every gun amongst the crowd, and flight tumultuous. The men in front had seen one Ashantee, armed, walking along the path. The Chiboos bolted from Mansu to Yancoomassie, fifteen miles or so, at sight of a single enemy. This is the truth, dolefully dragged from the King himself by his commissioner, Lieutenant Pollard, R.N. No one, therefore, would have been surprised at the natives running away when threatened with a surround. Unfortunately, it has to be added that the greater part of our Houssas and Kossus followed their bad example; The English officers were left almost alone with fifty men of the 2nd W.I. regiment, who had accompanied the reconnaissance. Lieut. Pollard, accurately judging the crisis, wedged

himself between two gigantic Houssas, and seized them round the neck with a clasp of desperation. His feet never touched ground for 200 yards, when the flying column was brought to stand by a fallen tree. Our force had one Houssa killed, two Houssas and two West Indians wounded. An empty ammunition box, part of a tent, and the store of eatables laboriously collected by Lieutenant Richmond for his private use, made all the spoil of the victors; but every action ending in a doubtful manner is much to be regretted. After the rout of Abrakrampa, our foes were evidently demoralised. They had learnt there the power of English arms, and desired nothing but to escape another lesson. The disastrous affair beyond Addismadi, next day, where the retreating Ashantees made a desperate and successful stand, and our natives fired into each other, revived their spirits. Lieut. Cochrane, R.N., tells me he had 24 killed and many wounded out of his single levy, numbering 180 men. Our natives stampeded too quickly for pursuit in that action, but that the enemy followed them up was proved next day by the many headless bodies on the path. So short a time did our prestige last. And the desertions from us were equally convincing of misfortune; only 20 men answered the roll call, when Mr. Cochrane mustered his men thirty-six hours after. The native levies sent out under their own kings report brave actions, but one must take their word for them. The king of Anamaboo declares himself to possess a gold-handled sword, and valuable spoils of every sort, captured in the re-

treat; but nothing of it is forthcoming. One cannot tell what disgraceful stampedes may have taken place. Certain it is that before arriving to the level of Mansu, the Ashantees had recovered courage, although desperately short of ammunition. They even ventured on an ambuscade upon the Akrofoom road, into which Major Home, R.E., and his party fell when proceeding to occupy that village. Two putrifying corpses in the road itself witness the heroism of their attack. This pair, perhaps small chieftains, devoted themselves to death in the hope of killing Major Home. They rushed out from the bush, one after another, came to the very roadside, and fired point blank. Not much sign of panic there, although the ambuscade failed entirely, and this recent action, in which the enemy have even captured spoils, an empty box, a piece of canvass, and a case of provisions, as I have told, will restore all their shaken confidence. Col. Wood has applied for and obtained a sort of body guard for his officers, consisting of fifty sailors and marines, who went up to him on the 29th ult.

The General left to-day, with Major Baker, on a tour of inspection round the outposts I have lately visited. We have to regret the death of Lieutenant Grey, R.M., of fever and dysentery; it was terribly sudden, for when I left him at Dunquah, four days since, he scarcely complained of uneasiness. The poor fellow was buried this afternoon.

Of the journey back to this place, little in my diary is worth recording. I note one of the extraordinary features of

this war exhibited in the return march from Akrofoom. Captains Huyshe and Butler desired to regain Mansu at once, as did I, but it never occurred to us to travel together, though the bush must be full of straggling Ashantees. As we were all to travel in hammocks, there could be no companionship, and we set out at half hour intervals, each alone, nor fearful of danger. I got away at 3.30 P.M. About an hour after starting, the rain came down in spouts and sheets. I had already enough experience to know that this meant fever to my men, so sent them along at a run, and dosed them with quinine on reaching Mansu. But they all suffered in the night, and could scarcely do their work next day. Found Colonel Webber at Mansu much better. Observed one of my boys greedily bargaining for a puppy dog. Asked what it was for, and he showed all his teeth in answering, "For chop!" English, "To eat!"

Starting at 6.30 A.M. on 25th, met Captain Despard, R.M., at Yancoomassie Fantee, conducting a train of 502 carriers, laden with 238,000 rounds Snider rifle to the front. Colonel Festing, Captain Despard, and Lieutenant Allen are the three surviving officers of that marine force which landed in June last. They have one sergeant comrade and one private. The sergeant is a quaint fellow. He appears to take it as a grievance that he should have outlasted so many stout fellows, and complains that "people look at him." What a task was Despard's with those five hundred stupid cowards, and only four or five "head men," almost as stupid and more cowardly,

to help him. Verily, the officers detailed for transport deserve some special recognition from the Humane Society, or the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Few civilians would have shown such patience. At noon, tremendous rain! rain to out-deluge any I have yet seen in the four quarters of the globe. I felt what seemed scarcely possible, the *weight of falling water* on my head, as if poured from a bucket. Hurrying on, up to mid leg in water on the hillsides, above the knees in every hollow space, I reached Dunquah before the road became impassable; all the streams and swamps here are already bridged, or, of course, we could neither have advanced nor returned. Dunquah camp was wholly drowned out. Huts and tents alike had a flood under foot. There is a terrible want of labour on this part of the road. It is alleged that Colonel Webber absorbs more than his share of carriers; not for private purposes, it need scarcely be explained, but for pushing stores beyond Mansu. There is an immense accumulation here, and no convenience for storing it. Fortifications of the redoubt greatly damaged by the rain. Marines recalled to their ships at last; twenty-one of them went down with fever or dysentery in three days, out of forty! I have told in what shiftless trim they were landed.

Rain and rain to Akroful next day, and my men very weak and feverish. Met Captain Rait, R.A., with his artillery harnessed to commissariat bullocks. He is taking up a howitzer, two 7 lb guns, and a Gatling. The bullocks seemed

to work very fairly, but, for some unexplained reason, Captain Rait's idea was not again used. The road between Akroful and Cape Coast crowded with women carrying tins and rice for the advance. I calculated there were not less than 2000 of them, all lively, all eager in pushing on. It is a pleasure to see the head women leading their convoys. What majesty in their deportment! With what an air they wield the silver-topped stick of office!—nothing masculine like that, save the swagger of French *tambour-majeure!* And how well they do their work, these stout dames; what order and regularity they keep! I wish the women of Africa would just "rise in their thousands" and assert that superiority so manifestly possessed.

Dec. 7th. We have absolutely no news of importance; the most exciting intelligence current only relates to the progress of the road, the devices of the transport service to obtain labourers, and the health of our men; on this point the report is very satisfactory. We have but one white man ill in the advanced posts, exclusive of officers; several of these are suffering, but not with serious complaints. Captain Furse now occupies the honourable position of leader to our march; he is expected to be at Yancoomassie Assin to-day. The Ashantees are still retiring to the Prah with greater expedition, it is said, than latterly. Prisoners all report that Prince Mensa, brother of the late king, was killed in the outpost affair at Faisoo; if it be true, this fact may account for the enemy's quickened movements, for the

loss of a chief so great would much depress them. Sir Garnet Wolseley and Major Baker have not yet returned from their tour; Commodore Hewett, V.C., who accompanied them, is expected back on Tuesday, but the General's movements are less certain; he is sure to return, however, some time this week. No action of any sort is thought probable; the story of the natives is that King Koffee has sent ample stores of powder and food to his army, with the uncomfortable assurance that he'll cut off the head of every man who crosses the Prah without his order. The proceedings of the enemy seem to make this report improbable; our outposts are now within twenty miles of the river, and still they retire. Of course, we could desire nothing better than a fight on this bank, with the English soldiers to lead it, but the road for them is not yet complete beyond Mansu. Serious difficulties are now commencing; there is four miles of swamp between Akrofoom and Faisoo, which must be bridged somehow. From Captain Glover there is nothing new; he has sent Captain Sartorius, with 3000 men, to test the temper of the tribes on his projected line of march beside the Volta, the eastern bank; no appearance of hostility was found, and Captain Sartorius is supposed by this time to have returned to Addah, where his chief is still preparing for his expedition against the Ahoonahs. It would seem that they present a more formidable front than he had expected, for the invasion should have begun a fortnight since. The Wassaws are at last in motion for their long-talked-of attack on

Chamah, and our men of war are preparing to support them; but, though stirring times are evidently at hand, we cannot do more. We are patiently awaiting the English troops; until they arrive, nothing further can be done in active warfare. The Ashantee force is believed to be all collected below Prahsu, where it presents a front much too formidable for attack by the few scores of men at our disposal. Colonel Wood, commanding the advanced posts, is not likely to put himself again in such a dangerous position as was his in the action of the 27th ult.

Recruits of a better type than Fantees are arriving. Houssas in bran-new uniform come in small parties from the leeward, and wild Kossus from Sherborough Island perform their war dance in the court-yard after each windward mail. More novel and extraordinary was the company of Bonny cannibals, recruited by Captain Nicol, who made their appearance on the 28th. Recruited is not the proper word, for these fine fellows are in fact a present from King George of Bonny, who has raised and uniformed them at his own expense to prove his gratitude to England and England's queen for acts of kindness during his late disaster.

Every one must have noticed, during the last three years, the names of Ja-ja, and Oko Jumbo, reported to be alternately successful in a savage war upon the Bonny river. These are two very powerful chiefs, both subject nominally to King George, but practically quite independent of that worthy old gentleman. For some mysterious cause of quarrel, they

plunged into the most desperate struggle, each occupying one side of a narrow river. King George's capital was taken and retaken several times with fearful bloodshed, in spite of all justice and in face of protest. How, exactly, we earned the monarch's gratitude I confess myself ignorant, for the inhabitants of the Gold Coast, unlike those of Sierra Leone, do not profess to speak authoritatively about events taking place five hundred miles away in another country. It seems probable that two years of constant fighting, most deadly and determined, exhausted the resources of each party. One of the chiefs retired at length, confessing his defeat, and leaving poor King George at rest. For this result, he thinks gratitude is due to England, and he displays it handsomely by contributing a hundred of his best soldiers to our service. Fine looking fellows they are, well-drilled, accustomed to the use of breechloaders, and trained to war at home by the anarchy of the last three years. Their uniform, also a present, consists of tunic and trousers in dark blue "baft," girt with a scarlet sash, and crowned by a cap of light blue velvet. Excellent taste has king George; though, for that matter, every negro of the coast may make a claim. Our Houssa uniform, which much resembles this in colour, is very serviceable and very neat, but the red *tarboosh* does not please the eye so much now we have seen the effect of pale blue velvet. The Bonny men are led by their king's son. In the *Gold Coast Gazette,* of November 29th, we have read, "Prince Charles Pepple to be captain, and Mr. John Jumbo to be

lieutenant, in the Bonny Native Contingent attached to Wood's regiment of Foot." Both these gentlemen were educated in England, and will converse with you upon any European topic, with more than average intelligence.

And yet they are cannibals, you exclaim. I fear it is a true charge, not of the prince or his lieutenant, of course, but of their men. For fear of a terrible outcry from the "man and brother" party, I haste to explain in what degree our Bonny recruits practise this deplorable habit of eating people. Cannibalism is with them a religious custom. For aught known to my informant, Captain Nicol, of the Hampshire militia, it may be to the great mass of Bonny *croyants* as offensive and as painful to observe, as the Pope's Syllabus to liberal catholics; but there is the fetish man, there his command, and it is duty to obey. The Bonnys, it appears, have three great Ju-jus, or hidden powers. First comes the Yam Ju-ju, whose influence decides the harvest; to him is sacrificed each year, at the recurrence of the yam crop, a human being, generally a prisoner. His head is cut off, without torture, and that, with other sacred fragments, is hung in the temple till next year brings another victim. Then comes the War Ju-ju, who is invoked at the declaration of hostilities, and propitiated from time to time by human sacrifice, with the same ceremonies. Last comes the white man's Ju-ju, who has trade in charge. His victim is a young Albino girl, which are common on that coast. After selection, at the appointed time of year, the child is given some weeks of unlimited

indulgence, being regarded as sacred. She is conducted in procession every day through the markets and the town, bearing a white wand. With this she is encouraged to point at anything that strikes her fancy, the which is immediately seized by attendant priests and confiscated for the Ju-ju's service. When the time comes, the child is put into a canoe very secretly, and cast overboard at the bar of the river, thus propitiating the deity, who has it in power to upset the white man's boats when coming to trade. Her poor little body thus escapes the fate of her fellow victims, who are devoutly eaten up by the crowd of faithful. King George and his sons have done their best by ridicule and example to repress this yearly slaughter, and not without effect. It may safely be predicted that human sacrifice is on its last legs at Bonny.

From this account it will be seen that the cannibalism so much talked of is purely superstitious, and practised on a very small scale. The Ashantees are in no danger of being eaten, for the yearly appetite of our friends was doubtless appeased before leaving their own country. And it is quite certain that Captain Prince Charles Pepple, who will dine with you on a proper introduction, and invite you to dinner in return, would not countenance any *hors d'œuvres* of human flesh. Be our minds therefore peaceful on this point, so that we may leisurely discuss, if occasion arise, whether it would or would not be justifiable to use real cannibals, the Fans for instance, against this truculent, murderous Ashantee. Who that has seen the awful signals of his course, the battered villages, the

uprooted orchards, the over-grown plantations, the bones that strew that solitude which once was thronged with harmless life; who that has heard the torturing, the ravishments which show alike Ashantee joy in victory or vengeance in defeat; who that has shuddered at the sight of girls scarcely yet beyond childhood, whose withered breasts and tottering limbs would seem to mark the last decrepitude of age; of men stapled to a log weighing fifty pounds, and made to work, finding their own food, dragging this load by the wrist; of women ripped from knee to ancle, to prevent their escape, and men deliberately blinded for the same purpose—who so horribly benevolent as to declare that any aid, any means, could be inhuman when the object is to crush the doers of such deeds? I have done justice before now to the good points of the Ashantee character. They are brave, ingenious, enterprising, and industrious, beyond the other natives of the coast. I have told also how useless and how cowardly are the Fantees. But there is a law older and higher even than that which enjoins upon us industry. The command, "Thou shalt do no murder," was not addressed to Christians, nor is it forcible on one colour or at one time. Few are the races of humanity that disdain the law, and these must be taught obedience at any cost when occasion arises.

The three weeks which I spent at Cape Coast Castle in this pause of operations were the very dullest I recollect. All military operations had come to a standstill, in the absence of an enemy. A busy time it was for engineers, transport

officers, control, and staff, but the fighting force had turned its sword into a bill-hook. My diary contains only such items as the requisition of a church for hospital purposes. Cape Coast is a hunting-ground of the Wesleyan missionaries, whose is the big chapel opposite Government House, but sundry chaplains have laboriously circulated the established dogma. I was gratified to observe that whilst the Wesleyan edifice had square windows, ventilators, and other vulgar conveniences of this climate, the episcopalian church showed an architecture orthodox and Gothic, small pointed windows, narrow doors, and a roof like a spire. This is the building demanded for a temporary hospital.

At the great epochs of woman's life, puberty, marriage, and birth of the first-born, there is an extraordinary display amongst the natives here, whether slave or free. They dress their wool with unusual care, shave the circlet of head more closely, buy or borrow a silken cloth, and beg the loan of all their friends' jewellery. In case of slave girls, it is a matter of pride with the mistress to set them off magnificently on these occasions. I am told that when a favourite slave of Mrs. Swanzy's comes to womanhood, all the town assembles to admire the show. The favourite wife of the chief opposite this house has just celebrated the birth of her first baby. She has a face, and, I believe, she once had a figure, to command attention anywhere, but the beauty of the latter has quite vanished at twenty years of age. Sitting in the verandah, I saw the girl come out of her husband's ram-

shackle old house, a blaze, a galaxy, almost an "ovation" i' faith, of gold and silk and aggry beads. With Mrs. Selby's permission, I beckoned her into the house, to examine these treasures at leisure. Very handsome they were. She had an immense comb of gold in her wool—this decked out smooth and turned up like a horse-hair cushion. Four or five gold butterflies very gracefully shaped in filagree, adorned the front of her head. Round the neck she wore five gold chains, all solid and of great weight. As many bracelets fatigued each arm, amongst them three composed of nuggets unworked, just pierced and strung together. They had a very pretty though barbarous effect. No wonder the Ashantees are eager to take Cape Coast Castle; it would be a loot indeed.

I hear extraordinary reports of the skill Fantees possess in medicine. All those white people who have lived long amongst them have confidence in their remedies. But it is a great responsibility a man takes on himself to use them upon a friend when ill. A maxim of doctors, in African fever, is that delirium or coma must be fatal. But the native herbalists admit no such necessity, and prove themselves correct. When poor ———, Mr. Selby's clerk, had fallen into the last hopeless stage, a woman of the country offered to cure him; nor does Selby much doubt that she would have done so. But with what face could he have written the poor lad's parents, if the trial failed? Here is the difficulty. I know that several of the military doctors tried to procure these

medicines, especially that alleged to be so powerful in dysentery. Governor Pine was saved by the use of it, when utterly abandoned of European science. But they failed. Most of the remedies are for outward application. A very simple one, used in headache, is applied to the eyes and forehead. Fantees also are alleged to possess a hair-dye of extraordinary virtue. It has the effect of restoring hair to its natural colour for a space of twenty-four hours. A gentleman of Elmina assures me that the silver grey of his locks is produced by the daily application of this liquid. They are snow white each morning. He did not begin to use it until his hair was already grey, or it would daily return to its natural black.

On December 1st, Sir Garnet, Commodore Hewitt, V.C., and Major Baker, left for a tour round the outposts. They will pass over all the ground I lately traversed, examining the sites of camp, and thoroughly overhauling the arrangments for forwarding stores. Yesterday, twenty "special service" officers landed, and the correspondent of the 'Illustrated London News.' On the 3rd arrived the homeward mail, under charge of the first officer; captain and purser dead of yellow fever. Captain Thompson, of the Queen's Bays, superintendent of police here, returned from a cruise. He gives an extraordinary account of the state of things at Axim. That wretched fort is blockaded by Ashantees or their allies. The bush comes up to the castle wall, and it is thick with enemies. If one puts one's head through a window

it is instantly saluted by a charge of slugs. Several sentries have been shot. Mr. Goldsworthy, the commandant, has nothing to eat, except salt pork and biscuit—not too much of that. He is about to be transferred to Elmina, and Captain Helden, of that post, will take his place. It's quite evident that unless we burn Coomassie, this coast will soon be too hot for us. Captain Thompson is ordered home immediately. Filliter, 2nd W.I., Eyre, Wood's regiment, Gordon, 93rd, Paget, S.F.G., all came in with fever yesterday.

On the 7th arrived our railway, aboard the 'Joseph Dodd.' I have already explained how impracticable it would be to lay the line, or even a mile of it, within the time at our disposal. Sir Garnet takes on himself the entire blame of this expensive mistake, so far as the public service is concerned, but he bitterly complains of those advisers who so deceived him. The railway will not be landed. Sub-Lieutenant Filliter tells me an amusing story. Passing through Akroful, he halted for a chat at the Mission House or fort, whilst his hammock-men dispersed to buy *kenki*. It chanced, at the same time, that the headmen of a convoy were out in the town, under orders not to return without bringing certain subordinate headmen who had deserted. These latter were known to be loafing about, but the pursuers, instead of looking for them, preferred to pounce upon any strangers they could find, knowing the officer could not identify a negro. Thus it befell that when Mr. Filliter sallied out impatiently to see what his bearers could be about, the last of them was just being cast

loose after "two dozen." Great indignation on his part, screams and counter screams, fury and fear on part of natives. In the end, to save time, all the headmen are tied up at once, and the bearers distributed amongst them, each with a bundle of bamboos. I expect those headmen will be careful for the future how they seize miscellaneous strangers on a false charge, lest, perchance, there be a hammock-man amongst them.

At 5.30 one morning I started for Elmina. Until these troubles began there was a broad road between the rival towns, but that is all grown up. Only a brickbat here or there, and little conduits bridging the frequent streams, tell that this differs from any other bush path well worn. Always, on either side, is the scrubby thicket, common round Cape Coast, when land has often been cleared for cultivation. No doubt there is much planting in the neighbourhood, which the thicket masks, but, for all that can be seen, one might as well expect to find subsistence in the forest round Mansu. About three miles from Elmina the landscape changes. No canvas of Turner's maddest, whereon a vaporous sea mixes with molten sky, where earth has a purple glow, and rainbows lean against a castle wall—none of those pictures which conscientious people sit solidly down to stare at, comes near the scene I actually behold. The wood clears all away. Relieved of this green mantle, a rugged soil displays itself in stony dells, and rocks too thinly clad in soil for aught but juniper to spring there. Away to the right, sloping down

from the seawall, wide plains of grass extend to the horizon, green in the foreground, purple with seed tassels—hazy, soft, and fairy-like—in distance. There is no life, no signs of any, by the reed-grown ponds which dot the plain. Flocks of small birds, brilliant of plumage and exquisite of song, flit from copse to copse of guava and dwarf palm. Away to the distance in front are houses and forest. On my left circles the endless sweep of restless billows climbing ever to the land, tossing upon it madly with scream and roar eternal. Out in the sea, apparently, as one follows the line of surf, stands a fairy castle, snow-white, immense, fantastic of form. Upon a web of rainbows is it founded. Gates it has of opal and sapphire; no shadow but is golden. Its turrets are moulded air, changing in shape and colour even whilst one looks entranced. Surely of hues like this is the City of the Blest! Here, in our very sight, the walls of jacinth, and the great gates of opal! Seated on rainbows, crowned with a sunbeam visible—thus did I first behold Elmina! It was a vision, a glory, so incredible, I stood amazed. This sight in the mid coast of Africa! A transfiguration indeed; for, on approach, the hues of heaven resolved themselves into spray and vapour; the fairy castle chilled and chilled to lines of most prosaic stone, mildewed and blackened. A stately building, indeed, is the fort of Elmina, but no more resembling the vision I had seen than is the Venice we all know like Turner's dream thereof. I approached it with awe; I left it with contempt.

Captain Helden was the commandant, though scarcely yet recovered of wounds received in the disastrous survey of the Prah. I knew this excellent officer long ago, when he and I came back together from the West Indies, that time all the world went mad about Governor Eyre. Traversing a town which greatly reminded me of Dutch settlements in the east, I came to the broad canals and embankments which are the pride of Elmina. Trees are loftier and more shady here than at Cape Coast; stores more numerous, larger, and of better class. Easy to see, by the numbers of "coloured" people abroad, that a different system of civilisation has prevailed here. I saw at least half-a-dozen boys and girls playing round, in native undress, who had fair hair, blue eyes, and skin as white as mine, barring the golden hue of sunshine, Turning the corner of a house abruptly, I even caught sight of a girl, fifteen years old at least, costumed only in the "cloth," whose golden hair would have procured her admittance to the most exclusive assembly of Havannah. The Dutch still pursue that system which we long practised in India. They encourage connections between their officers and the native women, believing that by such means they secure an invaluable army of informers, and, in addition. gradually raise a class more intelligent and devoted to their interests. English morality will not endure "miscegenation," as alone it can be practised, nor do I in the least mean to infer that the Dutch method is the best. Beyond any doubt at all, Africans consider it a degradation on the white man's

part to mix his blood with theirs. Not by the negro undefiled was ever the claim of brotherhood propounded. On the contrary, he grants to the white man honours more than his due, and would regard it as little less than blasphemous to arrogate equality with him. But the Dutch fashion secures an immediate return of safety and prosperity beyond the hope of our dignified system; and immediate return, gained by whatever means, is the aim of Holland's colonisation. It is quite certain that the Elmina people, though Fantees, show themselves vastly higher in courage, intelligence, and spirit, than their brethren of Cape Coast.

The castle of this place is a building only to be compared with its rival. It stands on a rock, projecting into the sea, which defends one half the circuit. The right flank is protected by the embankment and river I have spoken of. In front is a ditch of great depth, most solidly excavated, covered at bottom by the velvet rosettes of *pistia stratiotes*. Until this war, the king's, or Ashantee quarter of the town, came right up to the ditch, masking the castle guns; but the broad space thus occupied is now a mass of ruins uninhabitable. Scarcely a wall is standing over two feet high, so thorough has been the destruction. It will be remembered that at the battle of Elmina, the Ashantees had actually taken possession of the town, Amanquattiah establishing himself in the best house, that of Mr. Bartels, with his chiefs around him. Meanwhile, Colonel Festing landed his marines, and Lieutenant Wells took charge of the seamen hastily sent ashore from the 'Barra-

couta.' The Ashantees were roused from their dream of victory by the guns of the castle bombarding and destroying the disloyal quarter. Mr. Bartels informs me that Amanquattiah made an undignified escape at this sudden summons, leaping through a window. The Ashantees and their sympathisers withdrew to the plains outside the town, where, amongst walls and bushes, they showed excellent fight. Lieutenant Wells, meanwhile, received orders to re-embark. Loth to do this, he went to Captain Fremantle, on the scene of action, asking orders about the boats. Coming back, his men were marching the length of a wall, behind which they heard firing suspiciously near. Looking over, they saw a great force of Ashantees in front, actively engaged. Mr. Wells took on himself the responsibility of attack. He drew his men quietly round on the flank, and opened fire, with the triumphant result we know. It was indeed a massacre that ensued, and the day of Elmina, which the Ashantees call by another name, henceforth took place amongst their oaths beside that of Cormantin already spoken of.

I found Captain Helden making out passes for women to trade. All intercourse of the sort has been properly forbidden since the disloyalty of Elmina was thoroughly proved. Now that the Ashantees have withdrawn beyond reach, there can be no objection to their peddling, nor to free communication with neighbouring villages. The prohibition is therefore withdrawn.

A day of personal observation convinces me that the post of

Commandant in an African fort, requires every virtue, and most of the acquirements, within human reach. Soldier and lawyer, with a dash of divinity, he must always be, but the present crisis demands more varied accomplishments. A display of practical medicine is required, an acquaintance with the learned tongues as abused in the Dutch code, an accurate knowledge of international law, a power of the readiest and most complicated reckoning, an indefatigable capacity for discerning falsehood, and a gift of thriving on Australian beef. Add to these all the virtues:—Temperance, soberness, and chastity, faith, hope, and charity, patience, perseverance, and sudden death. I am bound to say that my friend Helden greatly distinguished himself in all these qualities and acquirements under my very sight on that day, December 8th, when I had opportunity of observing his manœuvres therein. All the eight hours was one round of work most stupid, troublesome, and contemptible. So far as I could see, every soul approached the Commandant with a lie in his or her mouth. Most notable and amusing amongst the crew were three merchant sailors, detained in gaol for the crime of desertion. They had "borrowed" a boat at Cape Coast, and come here, without leave of their captain. Tried and convicted, they, of course, had to go to gaol; but henceforward the aim of existence with them was to make the Commandant's life a thing unbearable. Now they refused to work, and now they refused to stop working. One of them could write, and he abused this accomplishment to the utmost. Their appearance to-

day before that miserable person who was called their ruler, arose, 1stly, from their refusal to work; 2ndly, from their refusal to eat; 3rdly, from a letter of complaints issued by them; 4thly, from a mysterious promise of confession anent some matter unknown; 5thly, from an affidavit, mostly solemnly and drolly sworn before each other, touching the facts of their voyage. On these accounts, they paraded at the castle after breakfast, clad in their prison uniform of cotton, marked "Gaol" on breast and back. Hulking fellows were they, white elephants of the most uncomfortable breed to their negro gaolers. Their affidavit came to the fact that they had shipped aboard the 'Kentish Lass,' which carried nearly 100 cases of rifles, revolvers, and ammunition thereto pertaining. She brought them to Grand Bassam, where the brig 'Dromo,' same owners, transhipped the cases and carried them to leeward. The burden of this affidavit, of course, is a charge against some English firm of supplying the Ashantees with arms; I know nothing more of it than is here set down. The affidavit was duly forwarded to the judge at Cape Coast Castle.

An interesting day I had at Elmina. Captain Helden is a man who acquires and gathers much wherever he be stationed, and his position had offered him unusual facilities in this place. He gave me valuable information about slavery and the slave trade—the way these things actually work. Everyone in England now knows that there is a corner of our empire where the Union Jack does *not* confer the boon of universal freedom.

But residents in Cape Coast are apt to grow restive under imputation of slave holding. They point out certain distinctions, and even differences, which are relied up to clear their practice from the stigma. I don't undervalue these points, but one may believe them equally weighty wherever a savage and simple race holds another in subjection. It is alleged that the interior slave trade scarcely influences Cape Coast; that the number of slaves purchased from other tribes is very small. This assertion would not easily be verified, but if the proportion be so trifling, it is curious that I should have found two slaves of the interior amongst my people. One of them, Yampon, the best negro I ever saw—not at all good, but the best—had his cheeks and temples all scored in tiny scars, as if by the dragging of a tooth-comb over the surface. He told me that this tribe-mark belongs, as he is informed, to the Moysies, a nation dwelling far inland, beyond the Ashantees. He had been brought thence when too young to remember anything, and was sold in Coomassie market-place. The other case was that of a woman, light-coloured, with small and delicate features, but ruined in figure, who bore rosettes of scars on each shoulder blade, on back and neck, and on each breast. I could not learn what country these marks indicated, but it was one very distant. However, putting these cases by as mere accident, I conceive it no sound plea that the number of interior slaves be small. Their existence, in any quantity, is proof of a genuine slave trade. But let us look at the state of things confessed. A man gets into debt to a certain

amount; he cannot pay either interest or principal. One of his children is valued for the latter, and formally passes into slavery. So much for the capital indebted. But the interest goes on accumulating at the rate of fifty to a hundred and fifty per cent. per annum. Another of his children passes under that charge; and then another, and another, till wife and husband, with all the family, are slaves. It is merely trifling with the question to say that they are lightly worked. They are so, indeed, but for the reason that in such a state of society all work is light and lazy. No one ventures to allege that any bounds exist to the power of the master. He might set his slaves to the hardest toil, and be sure he would do so if only he knew enough to make their labour profitable, and had spirit to supervise it. Just as much may be said for slavery in the East, where it rests on no fiction of pawning. There is not, by native law, any punishment for the death or mutilation of a slave; by English law there is, and I am willing to believe that such cases are very rare. But the entire despotism of the master is fully shown by his rights over a female "pawn." He is at liberty to make a concubine of her, and the children born are slaves. More than this, if the father-pawn, or, it may be, the husband-pawn, desires to free such concubine, he cannot take away her children except on payment to the owner of a certain sum per child. Needless to say that a pawned family is never redeemed, though any active young man may work out his freedom.

The other side of the question is this. A slave becomes a

member of the household, and frequently proves the most powerful person therein. The master is responsible for his debts, even those incurred for buying a wife. He must keep him in sickness and idleness. If the slave commit a crime, or get engaged in a "palaver," the master must clear him. So entire is the slave's absorption into the master's family that, on failure of natural heirs, the principal slave succeeds to the property. The law of inheritance in Africa is curious, but not without example. A son has no claim, nor a daughter. Property descends by the collateral branch, a man's eldest nephew on the sister's side inheriting. When a man has no sisters, or sisters childless, the principal slave becomes his heir, to the exclusion of his children. But of this rule also there is example amongst the Malays.

As to the ill-treatment of slaves, it behoves a conscientious writer to speak cautiously. He will find very different reports. But Captain Helden, in our long talk on the subject, assured me he had traced and caused to be produced in court various implements of torture whereof runaway slaves complained. And in a case like this, where evidence is so difficult to get, and so unreliable when found, the common laws of human nature may properly be cited. It would take very clear proof to convince me that a greater or less proportion of the Fantees are not occasionally tempted to maltreat their slaves.

A clerk in the court here named Hughes was caught by the Ashantees a short time ago near Dunquah. He swore by

Cormantin twice, without visible effect of softening their unpleasant resolve to cut his head off. Roused to despair by the odious preparations visible, he volubly swore by the late disaster of Elmina, and escaped. The Ashantees, therefore, don't always respect their oaths—not, at least, in the mouth of an enemy. Hughes confirms it to me that the Fantees do not call their children by the name of the day of birth, but by a name sacred and devoted to that day; thus, Koffee does not *mean* Friday, but all children born on Friday are called Koffee; so with the other days of the week.

Great excitement is just now pending in Elmina, on account of various charges against the police. It is alleged on several hands that they completed the sack and pillage begun by the Ashantees. I read several affidavits setting forth these charges against one or other members of the force. Most coolly and systematically the work of plunder was carried on if there be truth in these statements.

Dec. 12th. The 'Himalaya' lies at anchor in the roads, with the 2nd battalion of the Rifles on board, together with sixty men of the Royal Engineers, and the 'Tamar' has just come in with 640 men of the 23rd regiment. The home government has acted with extraordinary promptitude, and the praises of Mr. Cardwell are on every tongue. The story goes that he sat up all night in consultation with the war office authorities. Immediately on receipt of Sir Garnet's first despatch, a cabinet council assembled, and all the measures suggested were put in hand at once. One example of the energy of late infused

into the War Office may be mentioned. With his despatch, Sir Garnet forwarded the surveys and tracings already made by his topographical staff. These surveys were collected, lithographed, printed off, and sent on board the 'Himalaya' within thirty-two hours. The unapproachable Prussians could not have been more rapid than our authorities in this case. It is unfortunate, however, that our preparations to receive the white troops have not been carried on with the speed expected, or, to put the matter in a more honourable light, our success has been more thorough than could be hoped. The road is open only as far as Yancoomassie Assin, a place by no means to be confounded with the nearer Yancoomassie. It is still twenty miles short of the Prah. But, on the other hand, we had every reason to expect that the Ashantees would make a great stand about this very point. In fact, they evidently intended doing so; but Amanquattiah's old troops had had enough of it. Sir Garnet is not to be accused of miscalculation because the 'Himalaya' and the 'Tamar' have to be sent off for a holiday cruise of three weeks. On the contrary, this fact shows how well he has employed his time and the insufficient means ready to his hand. For—the coincidence is curious—on the very day that the white troops were signalled, authentic news came down of the Ashantee flight. There is no doubt at all about it, they have recrossed the Prah with desperate haste. It seems that the king duly sent reinforcements, of which the numbers are variously reported between 5000 men and 600. It is pro-

bable they were from 1000 to 1500. With them came ammunition in plenty, and provisions, and secret orders to the General. These fresh men were the assailants of Col. Wood, who fought and pursued him with all the former pluck of the "invincible Ashantee." The older campaigners flatly refused to fight, and took advantage of the engagement to pack up their goods. They would not even wait for morning, but pursued their retreat by torchlight; scouts sent after found the extinguished brands by the road-side. The success just achieved does not seem to have encouraged them a bit. The march did not cease until they struck the Prah at the old ford, which was crossed by felling trees on either bank, and thus forming a bridge. The report is that they lost 300 men in crossing. Col. Wood sent a party after them, taking the precaution to attach to it a couple of West Indians who could not speak a word of Fantee; thus he secured himself against a made-up tale. They followed the track of the invaders to the very bank, and thoroughly explored it for two miles up and down. The Prah at this point is sixty to seventy feet wide, very swift and deep. The bush, we are rejoiced to learn, is of the same character as that beyond Mansu. The West Indians report that lemon-trees, oranges, and "plum-trees" abound. They entered the river thigh deep, and fired into the other bank, without reply, so that it would appear the Ashantees have pursued their march beyond the river. For this act of pluck the General has sent them £2 apiece. Our whites will not be needed, therefore, on this side the

Prah, and we can cut the road, and build the camps for them, in peace. In consequence, the 'Himalaya' and the 'Tamar,' which arrived to-day, will put to sea again, without landing their men, for three weeks' yachting.

Sir Garnet and Commodore Hewitt, V.C., had not returned from their trip inland, but on receipt of a despatch from Capt. Brackenbury they hastened back. They met some of the officers newly arrived strolling at midday on the road, "towards Coomassie," as they called it, and the General gave them a good-humoured wigging for exposing themselves. This is a lesson, however, which teaches itself very rapidly. Capt. Glover has left Addah for his invasion of the Awoonah country, but we have no late news.

Dec. 15*th.* On the 14th, Capt. Buller returned from the Prah, having actually stood upon the bank of that famous river. No sign of Ashantees on either side, and two scouts sent over profess to have gone a mile inland without seeing a trace of camp. It is a lovely country, and the bush much thinner. The 42nd regiment is expected on the 20th inst. H.M.S. 'Amethyst' sailed for Ascension yesterday with invalids, amongst whom was Captain Thompson, Queen's Bays, who is suffering from overwork.

This night I woke up with a consciousness of some strange feeling in the head. Jumping up, it appeared I could not see, my eyes being closed and my face double its proper size. Dr. MacNalty, who is appointed surgeon to the staff, reduced the swelling in two or three days, but he had no

suggestion to offer about its cause. Captain Baker, brother to the Major of that name, is gazetted to poor Captain Thompson's position as inspector of police. On the 17th I went to his office, seeking a rifle for my "boy" Yarbro, and there beheld a review of the Ashantee prisoners. There were at this time 73 of them, besides a chief or two who occupied lodgings in a coal cellar at the castle. The dearth of carriers has become so serious that even these 73 cripples are requisitioned. On the 12th Sir Garnet himself went to Beulah, to raise labourers, but he had small success. The prisoners were ranged in a double line across the police-yard, and underwent inspection. Never were seen more miserable objects. Every form of disease to be produced by want, fatigue, and unwholesome diet had its specimens there. The frame of these men seemed to me much less muscular than that of the Fantees, but they were too far gone in misery for fair comparison. It had only been suggested that they should carry light loads as far as Inquabim, the first camp; but twenty-three of the number were pronounced unequal to this effort. The king of Abrakrampa is dead of smallpox.

On the 18th I started for the Prah, at 6.15 A.M. Reached that weary old halting-place, Asseyboo, at 9.30. The police are withdrawn from the road, and search is given up.

Akroful, 11.45. This is the second camp for our white troops' march, and the huts were nearly complete already. I found here Dr. Samuels and Mr. Commissary Bowring

dwelling alone in a native house. The mission-house was in course of repair. Dr. Samuels showed me the *spolia opima* of a large tarantula, slain by him in single combat. This was one of the briskest actions of the war. Imagine the doctor reading on his bed—reading, it may be of England, home, and beauty. Picture him listlessly rolling over, in search of a more comfortable position. What a start is there, my countrymen! What a pause of dread incredulity as he stares aloft at a ghastly reptile, creeping, creeping down the wall! What a leap is that from bed to door, and how agonised the tones which summon "Boy!" Hastily comes the boy, wrapping his ungirt cloth around his loins. One glance he throws through the open door, one scream of dread he utters—and with one bound he flies the scene. Doctor shouts after him in vain. There is no help in man. Alone, in night gear, he must confront this awful foe. Doctor rises to the occasion. He snatches his sword, draws it, advances! The tarantula, meanwhile, poised on his hinder legs, surveys his victim cruelly, seeking the weakest spot. A lunge, a retreat, pursuit, cut, point, fury, and scrimmage! After desperate rallies, there is a pause, whilst man and spider take breath, and observe results. Three legs lie on the floor, and gratefully the Doctor notes that none of his own are missing. Three legs he picks up carefully and deposits in a portmanteau, whilst tarantula looks on with baffled fury. Time! Another rush, cut and thrust, high and low, on wall and floor and bed, out at door, back to the

corner, hurrah, hullabaloo, and faugh a ballagh! A second pause—Doctor picks up another leg, and again remarks with pride that it is not his own. This trophy he puts in a rice box. The enemy grows feeble, and appears to miss some parts of his anatomy! Once again the battle joins, more desperate, more deadly. Victory! The foe's huge head is severed, and thrown in triumph into a bucket.

> "Such was the scene! What now remaineth here,
> What sacred trophy marks the hallowed ground,
> Recording"

A doctor's prowess and a spider's fate? The very legs in question were produced for my scrutiny from that self same portmanteau, and the identical head, still scowling from the identical bucket.

But your tarantula is indeed a fearful wild fowl. Call him and class him amongst spiders, if you please, but he is most like a devil. I myself killed one in Cape Coast, quite a small demonkin, but too large to stand in a saucer. The full-grown monster stretches about the width of a breakfast plate. He has fur all over him, soft, and delicately mottled in brown and black and stone colour. Legs about as thick as a straw, furry and mottled like his body, ending in broad suckers, wherewith he takes a death grasp. On the under side huge red nippers, such as would doubtless tear out a piece of flesh. When this foul brute gets hold, it is necessary to cut his legs off with scissors, so firm is the grasp of his paws and jaw. The bite is very poisonous. Fantees have a dread

beyond words for the tarantula. They believe he can spring a great distance, and has the malignity to use his power with or without provocation. I do not know whether this is true, but the structure of his paws leads one to doubt;—suckers are not convenient for springing. He certainly has no fear of man, putting up his great forelegs like a *mantis*, when threatened with a stick;—this I guarantee, for myself have seen it. The tarantula does not love houses, for which Heaven be thanked. If he did, neither white man nor negro would venture to live in his country. He dwells in the forest, where, without web or cave, he forages for food. I should conceive that birds and lizards would be his favourite game. I heard of three seen during our expedition. The one I killed, which is possessed by Mr. Com. Ravenscroft; this at Akroful; and another, which Mr. Hart discovered on his bed at Essiaman. With what object the monster was creeping down to our Doctor's face is not to be known. The Fantees declared that it came to fasten on him, and suck his blood, but no one believes Fantee reports.

There is another large spider very common in the woods. This has a black body, hairless, handsomely barred with yellow. He spins a great web, in the centre of which hangs his carcass like a cluster of wasps. This kind is harmless, and you will often see the children carrying one on a stick, tied by his leg. A species much more curious, and one, I believe, unknown to arachneologists, dwells beyond the Prah. I think him a stranger to Fantee land, because our servants

and soldiers were as much interested and struck with his beauty as were we. None of my own attendants had seen one before. He was generally supposed to be a land crab, to which reptile he bears the closest outward resemblance. His shell is about an inch across, by half an inch in length, of the loveliest and most delicate yellow, scalloped at the edges, where occurs a dainty moulding of blue. There never was a land crab so tastefully coloured and marked, though some of them carry shells very richly painted. But on turning the creature over, his alliance with the spiders is evident. Under the beautiful shell, protected by it on all sides, so that not even a claw projects beyond the cover, is the body and head of a true *arachne*, smooth, and of a dark red colour. The spider is attached to his shell by the thorax and back of abdomen, just as are the cryptopod crabs. It is manifest that he makes no web. I only succeeded in catching one of these insects, and him I lost, but several were brought home. Captain Grant, 2nd W.I., has a handsome specimen.

Dunquah, 2.50 P.M., in which camp, once so crowded, I found but a single stranger, Lieut. Winter, 33rd Regiment. The Gatling which has come up thus far refuses to "traverse," and it is found we must leave it behind. We sat late round a single lantern, placed upon the earth, making the darkness so thick it seemed to be a pall hung round. There is again a block of stores at this place, and no shelter for them. As to the redoubt, it is crumbling to pieces day by day.

19*th*. Men all late. They complain that one of their

number is not able to do his work. The poor fellow has a wound in the leg, gallantly earned in fighting the Ashantee; —at least, we'll hope it was earned gallantly, as there is no evidence against that charitable view. I engaged a slave in his place, the ugliest of all my ugly crew. It afterwards turned out that this fellow was under bond to Mr. Selby, who had engaged him from his master for twelve months. When the war broke out, the owner thought he could do better with his slave, and brought him hither. Yancoomassie Fantee is now a fine camp, with eight large huts, able to quarter 100 men each. What a change of scene is here since that night when Wood's regiment took shelter from the rain, and I shared a hut of palm-leaves with Lieutenant Richmond! Overtook Captain Buckle, R.E., here, who had halted to dress his leg. Many officers are suffering from boils. During the process of breakfast, in a village without a name, I watched the people going past, Fantees, of course, and mostly women. Nearly all smoked, young and old. But their consumption of tobacco makes no serious item in the revenue. One pipeful will last a man all day, though he is always lighting up and puffing. His manner is to ram a half-inch plug into the bowl, so tight it will neither draw nor burn. Twenty pieces of charcoal will blacken and die out before this ration is consumed. The quantity of deformed persons passing along the road really surprises one. It would seem that half the negroes of the coast have either guinea worm, string halt, or some other misery. The former complaint is so common, one ceases to notice it.

One woman in every four appears to be afflicted, and men and women alike have scars all over them. The absence of clothing shows every thing of this sort. By the bye, I take it as a fact to be clearly proved that the more clothes fashion ordains, the more romantic will be courtships, and the more exalted men's idea of love. There can be no romance or sentiment where there is no mystery. Marriage becomes a most prosaic affair with all savages of the Tropic, but I have heard that the Esquimaux are not destitute of a tender anxiety about their brides.

Mansu, 1.30 P.M., over a road very wet and rugged. Mr. Mann's engineer labourers have not yet done the smoothing of it. I found the control officer in charge, Mr. Com. Elliot in great rage and distress. Two hundred of his men deserted last night. There is a bad system at work. Colonel Festing, at Dunquah, has orders to pay a certain sum per head for each carrier brought to him by a king. These sovereigns are not proof against such palpable temptation. They encourage their subjects to desert from Mansu and other stations, returning to Dunquah, where they are again enlisted.

20*th*. Akrofoom, reached in two hours and a half's march from Mansu, has all been levelled with the ground. The last time I rested under its fig-trees, the business of fortification was going on all round. And Major Home, R.E., was filing out from the shadow of the forest, wet to his waist, followed by the long train of Houssas, whom he had led to attack the

enemy, what time Colonel Wood's regiment arrived too late. An hour's march brought me to Sutah, the fifth camp. This place will always be remembered by those of us who had taste for botany; perhaps, in no long time, by thousands of English ladies who have not yet heard the name. For, in the swamp below this hill, we first saw the Sutah lily, a beautiful flower of which many hundred roots have been brought home. It greatly resembles that favourite sister from Japan, but its hues are vastly more delicate, and its head more graceful. The mud round this camp was very deep and sticky. I found there Lieutenant Wauchope, 42nd Regiment, a volunteer, who was about to be overtaken by his comrades.

After rest, and a lunch in one of the pretty huts designed for officers, I pushed on, reaching Yancoomassie Assin at 6.30 P.M. Captain Fowler, 2nd W.I., was commandant, and a good example had he been setting to commandants upon the road. No accumulation of stores at Yancoomassie Assin, not a solitary rice box, nor a case of cartridges. It was but a day or two since Captain Fowler had been granted a control officer in the person of Mr. Marsh. Mr. Commissary Ravenscroft was there also, laid up with boils. Likewise, a doctor, who possessed but six grains of quinine screwed up in paper. There was at this moment a great lack of medical stores along the road. No official is to blame for it, nor for the lack of food and ammunition; Fantee cowardice, treachery, and laziness were the cause.

What manner of life is it, you may ask, at these lonely

camps in the midst of the forest. I will tell you—it is like the life of shipwrecked sailors on a desert island—like Robinson Crusoe, Alexander Selkirk, the Maroon of Florida Keys, or any desperate and Heaven-abandoned wretch whom you can think of. This is the scene on which Captain Fowler looks from dawn to dewy-eve: a sandy slope, burning white in the sun, about an acre in extent; upon it two rows of huts, built each to accommodate two officers, walled of bamboo, and thatched with palm-leaves; at top of the slope a mess-hut, open at back and front, with palm-leaf benches along a table of box-lids nailed together; next, the military huts, eighty feet long and thirty broad, fitted on either side, down all their length, with a wide sleeping-bench. At bottom of the hill, on the other side the road, stand native sheds, built of palm or plantain leaves stretched over four sticks. The sun has dried and crumpled them, changing their hue to every tint of green and gold and brown. They are pitched everywhere, and all about them lounges a crowd of negroes, screaming, bargaining, and calling names. Beside the road, a very barricade of boxes piled—the burdens just laid down, stores destined for the depôt at Prahsu. A belt of brushwood girds round the sandy oasis, an abbatis of trees cut down, already overrun by creeping plants and flowers. At eighty yards distance, on every side, towers the dark green forest. Over all is a cloudy sky, from which the heat pours pitilessly down. That confining wall of forest gives one a sense of suffocation; one longs to escape the

trees—to see once more an horizon—to watch the sun set, yea, even to see him rise. No pleasure has the commandant of sport, save only when he scours the bush in search of deserters. He grows to look upon himself as a slave of Fantee carriers, day and night at their command, the servant of servants. His only amusement, rarely to be enjoyed—for exacting are these black masters of his—lies in watching the small dark aperture of the wood, through which, perchance, a comrade bound for the front may show his perspiring face. Cordial is then the welcome, and profuse the draughts of tea, but after five minutes' gossip he must again attend his despots; for verily some of them will have deserved a flogging in that interval.

21*st*. Starting from Yancoomassie Assin at 7.25 A.M., 10.30 saw me at Barraco, the next halting-place. It was a cloudy morning, and I remarked more signs of life than are usual in West Africa. It may be that the Ashantees passed this thinly peopled district, both in going and returning, too quickly to exterminate the life therein. Evidence of their great number was abundant. Nearly all the distance to Barraco is one long camp. It will be remembered that the Ashantees struck into the main road about Sutah, and marched to Prahsu by the route of their invasion. We could see that many old sheds, built for the use of the advancing army, had been lately repaired and re-roofed. Others were quite new. I pushed a little way into the bush, where signs of the multitude lay thickest, and found more

huts, more broken pots and worn out baskets, as far as I proceeded. The Ashantees did indeed cross the border "in their thousands," and it is still a great host we are pursuing.

But I would not have the reader think there were such numerous tokens of animal life around, even in this favoured spot, as you will behold, say, in mid Atlantic or the populous slopes of the Sahara. I only heard more noise than usual in the bush, and am not a bit prepared to assert that it came from animals at all. There were a good many birds about, mostly parrots, in the first hour of the march. Grasshoppers abounded, which proves how hastily the Ashantees had passed by. The chase of the sportive grasshopper furnishes a livelihood to many deserving families of the West African stock, and it is followed by all classes with enthusiasm. *Mantides* were common, but I noticed none of unusual type. In fact, let me repeat here what has been said before,—I saw no living creature in all my journeys, barring a snake at Dunquah. The road becomes much drier as you approach Barraco, where I found Russell's regiment stationed. Lieutenant Gordon, 98th, has received well-earned promotion for gallantry and excellent service. Sir Garnet acquainted him with this reward in a letter most gratifying to Mr. Gordon and to all his friends. His new regiment is the 84th.

At Barraco is a burial place of the Assins, into whose country we have now advanced. This people originally dwelt on the other side the Prah, under the sovereignty of the Ashantees. They moved across the river to escape the bloody

tribute exacted by their masters, and took up new seats between the river and Mansu. The Assins belong to the same ethnological family as the Fantees and Ashantees, with either of whom they can converse. The territory abandoned by them north of the Prah has never been repeopled, but still remains a waste, or no-man's-land, protecting the true frontier of Ashantee. I saw no other burial place, except the desolate marsh by Salt Pond, at Cape Coast Castle, and the forest cemetery of Akankuarsi, in Ashantee. There were no marks to distinguish the graves, except a few bits of common pottery. At Cape Coast, the memorial of a dead Fantee consists of a vessel designed in the Staffordshire potteries for no such public exhibition—a vessel without a name. It is the custom of all these people to bury their dead under the soil of their dwelling-rooms, nor do I know under what circumstances this rule is violated. Such golden ornaments as the family can afford are ostentatiously interred with the dead, to be dug up, when need arises, with no ostentation at all. The Ashantees had evidently plundered a large proportion of these Assin graves. The forest was thickly set with holes and pitfalls, whilst skulls and bones lay everywhere around.

The road from Barraco to the Prah is drier and better opened, perhaps by the multitude of Ashantees lately passing it. Starting at 11.15 A.M., I reached the furthest camp 2.50 P.M., and beheld the sacred river, the Bossom Prah, rolling its brown stream seawards.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE FURTHER SIDE THE PRAH.

A Run across the River—My Cannibal Crew—Lieut. Grant and the Scouts—Contrast between the Opposite Banks—A Busy Camp—Preparing for the White Troops—Remains of the Redoubt built in 1863—The River Prah—An Ashantee Bridge—Loss of Life—Ghastly Sights—Quantity of Canoes—The Suspension Bridge—Numbers of the Enemy—Wood's Regiment—Intended Movements—A Strange Night Scene—Electric Fish—Droll Compliment to Russell's Regiment—Night March—Lieutenant Knox, R.A.—Lieutenant Mann, R.E.—The Officers Attached to Captain Butler—Colonel Colley—Captain Glover's Movements Announced—My Bearers Bolt—Touching Scene on the Road—Kola Nuts—Christmas Day in Cape Coast Castle—Departure of Sir Garnet and Staff, with the Naval Brigade, for Coomassie—Attack on Chamah—Wailing of the Women—New Faces—Death of Mr. Charteris and Lieutenant Wells, R.N.—Memorandum for the Guidance of the Troops—Arrival of 1st W.I. Regiment—Their Absurd Uniform—The Gatling Returns—Death of Captain Townsend—Complaints of the Women Carriers—Astonishing Loyalty of Elmina—Landing of the Rifles—Interruption of the Telegraph—Wholesale Desertion of Fantees—Rumours from Ashantee—Captain Butler's Proceedings.

Prahsu-Ashantee, December 21, 1873.

This heading is no mistake, nor hallucination of fever. I am writing under a cotton tree of giddy height, seeded and grown

in Ashantee. My desk is a buttress curiously pierced at the ground level. Alongside runs the path by which our savage enemy retired to their own country. Their tumultuous march has levelled the brushwood for yards around, and the chequered sunlight falls upon a foot-deep carpet of brown leaves. The rushing ripple of the Prah, over which six Bonny cannibals have just paddled me, with many a shout and shriek, has died upon the ear. It is still as death under the canopy of leaves. The evening sunshine drips through like molten gold, falling from bough to bough. Every tint of green a skilful artist could compound is seen in the foliage overhead; but the prevailing hue is deep, rich, and metallic, only to be matched, I think, in that much-decried pigment verdigris. All about, in little nooks of forest, almost smothered with tall reeds, lie ruined shanties of the enemy. But of his corporeal presence not a trace has yet been found. He has vanished, leaving plenty of rack behind. Lieutenant Grant, 6th regiment, who may boast in future years of having first crossed the dreaded river—for I am but the second to cross—has followed the track as far as the next village. The scouts under his command, encouraged by witnessing such cool resolution, declare themselves to have gone six miles inland. On the road, at least, and in its immediate neighbourhood, there are no Ashantees, nor signs of any. The villages are abandoned, except by the dead, who lie all about on the river bank, in the bush, and under the sheds of leaves. A report is current which, if true, will account for

this hasty retreat. I heard a fortnight since, from the natives of Cape Coast, that King Gaman, or Agaman, dwelling to the north-west of Ashantee, had made an invasion, taking his heriditary foe when in deep straits. Though the story is very probable, I did not repeat it, for the reason that it could not be traced to any channel of information; but the rumour is in every one's mouth here, and it evidently comes direct from the front. Without putting too much faith in the tale, it must be admitted that belief therein will explain facts very mysterious at present, namely, the hurried retreat of the enemy after his successful skirmish of the 27th ult., and his unexpected retirement from the river.

Returning under charge of my cheerful cannibals, who are sworn to drown or save me if the canoe upset, every one asks what the other bank is like. I can only say it is exactly like this bank, except the clearing. But though nature's work be identical, there is all the contrast between civilization and barbarism, life and death. This bank resounds with the clang of axe and cutlass, the shout of busy men, the thump of mallet. A heavy task have Colonel Wood and his officers. In a fortnight from this time a camp for 5000 men, and a fortified depôt for the stores required in our march to Coomassie, must be made in the midst of a dense jungle. It will be believed that no one is idle. Regulars and irregulars, soldiers and labourers, all work together, cutting bush, collecting thatch, burning rubbish, digging holes, planting stakes. Here is a motly squad of Wood's regiment in long

white smocks and black felt caps—the ugliest uniform ever devised—at drill; there another company, the cannibals, coming from the bush in one long file, bearing posts upon their heads. Ten yards beyond, Lieutenant Allen, R.M.A., is teaching his Houssa artillerymen to aim, whilst Lieutenant Saunders, R.A., is taking sights across the river with mysterious implements of science. Captain Buckle, R.E., meanwhile draws a plan at the entrance to his tent, wherein our muddy river is depicted of cerulean blue, and dabs of green represent the forest. Everywhere long lines of men wind in and out amongst the trees; everywhere are officers drilling, ordering, explaining, consulting, busy as bees. Such times have not been on the Prah since 1863, when the 4th W.I. were posted here for four months, and built an intrenchment, of which we curiously trace the ditch and parapet. The officers and the few white soldiers we have here are under canvas, but the natives have built long sheds of palm-branch and plantain leaf, in which they sleep. Of these the Bonny shed is the neatest, for these people have so far advanced in civilization as to plait their thatch after the Eastern manner.

The Prah has been measured, and found to be sixty-five yards broad at the point selected for the bridge. It is a deep swift stream, the colour of mud, and nearly the consistence. Opposite to our camp is a creek, perhaps forty feet broad, which pours a darker stream into the rapid puddle. Across this still remains the rope, a creeper, by which those Ashantees who crossed above its outlet rejoined their comrades. I cannot

think that the main body used the path which I have lately followed on the other side. It is scarcely more than two feet wide, and, though badly cut up in the damper spots, does not show the signs of an army's passage. That proportion of the invading force which used this immediate neighbourhood for their crossing have left the remains of their bridge. Between two trees which had fallen, or had been felled long since, and lay half buried in the stream, a rope is stretched, which still drags in the racing water. With no other assistance they tried to reach the other bank. Undoubtedly, the loss of life must have been great, if it be true, as alleged, that the mass of the Ashantees cannot swim. The depth of the river has not yet been measured, but, as Mercutio says, "It is enough; 't'will serve." Of the strength of the current some guess can be made from the fact that three canoes, with practised men on board, were upset yesterday in measuring the breadth. Small chance had an Ashantee swept from that rope. The Fantees say, though Heaven knows how they should tell, that three hundred lives were lost, and, in point of fact, several bodies have been found in the length of our camp. One was hanging in the nearest tree when our men arrived, another was caught by the boughs of an overhanging bush, a third lay entangled on a raft. Several corpses were also found on the bank itself, which have been burnt or buried. Two bodies, probably chiefs, hung on the branches of a tree, suspended in the baskets which are their travelling carriages. On the further bank, too, were some who had

reached shore only to die. Very striking and ghastly was the attitude of a corpse just opposite the site of our bridge. It was crouched upon the bank, the head resting on the hands, and elbows on the knees;—at this moment I look up and see a heap of bones with turkey buzzards waddling round. It will be buried to-morrow by the scouts. Above this, up stream, are the ruined huts of a camp. The banks are very high and steep, not less, perhaps, than forty feet. If we could have caught the enemy crossing there would have been a terrible massacre. But the bulk of the army did not use their rope bridge. Twenty-three canoes, some very large indeed, have been discovered and brought up by scouts. These were ferried over without order, for there is a track of many feet through every part of the bush on the other side. Beside them, nearly four miles down the river, a suspension bridge is reported, really a creditable piece of work. The Kossus discovered it, and Lieutenent Clowes describes it to me as a structure somewhat like those bridges I have admired in the Far East, though less elaborate. Eight big lianas or "bush ropes" sustained a footway of two bamboos side by side, along which, on a slip ring, ran four big rafts. These latter remained, just as they were left, with several corpses putrifying on them. By this, as I think, the greater portion of the army crossed. For, whatever those may say who have not thoroughly explored this line of retreat, the Ashantees numbered not less than thirty thousand men, besides women and slaves. I have not ceased to declare from the first

of my experience in the war, that the fighting force against us reached that number, and though the loss has been heavy, no doubt it might be balanced by the reinforcements lately sent from Coomassie. In this estimate I am countenanced by Captain Gordon, late 98th regiment. No one has had such experience as he, and no one has seen so much of the enemy. He tells me that though the length of the abandoned camps, along the roadside, is surprising, their depth in the bush fairly astonished him. Shed beyond shed in irregular lines they stretch two hundred yards back, on a mile-long frontage, and then occurs a belt of uncleared bush behind which lies another camp, and another, equally large. In these light huts Ashantees pack as close as they can lie; and when all the scattered divisions reassembled beyond Mansu, thirty thousand, I repeat, is the lowest calculation of them to be accepted by one who has followed their track.

The busy troops up here are Wood's regiment, consisting of Cape Coast men, Kossus, Bonny men, and loyal Elminas, in all 459 men; 87 of the 2nd W. I., under Captain Grant; 40 men of Rait's Houssa Artillery, under Lieutenants Saunders and Allen; two sergeants and two corporals, R.A., two marine artillerymen and two bluejackets, with two 7-lb guns and one 7-inch howitzer. On the 23rd, Russell's regiment, consisting of Houssas and native recruits, will move up here. The General is expected before the end of the month, leaving Cape Coast Castle on the 27th. Not until his arrival will the bridge be begun. The Rifles and the 23rd regiment will return on the

3rd prox., and will begin to land by half battalions on the 4th, if all be ready for them. The 42nd regiment will not be landed as a regiment, so far as is yet decided, but will be used to fill up vacancies by death and disease.* The fact is, that more than 4000 men could not possibly be fed beyond the Prah, and we shall have close upon that number. Two white battalions will number 1300 men; a naval brigade of 300, though, I believe, the number is not yet fixed, artillery, engineers, and officers will make considerably more than 2000 men; and native allies, Houssas, etc., should bring our army to 4000. These should be enough for the fighting, and too many, I fear, for the loot of Coomassie. Loot there ought to be, and of the most satisfactory class, but our men will have to be very smart, or the Kossus and Houssas will get before them. I regret to tell that the Gatling guns, from which so much was expected, have proved a failure One of them already refuses to "traverse," and has been left behind at Dunquah. They are found very awkward in carrying. However, it is thought that an effort will be made to get one of them forward. The finished road was not even up to Mansu when I passed through three days ago, and there is yet the worst tract of country before Lieutenant Mann. Between Mansu and Yancoomassie Assin, hundreds of yards of path are shin-deep in puddled clay. But, though equally undulating, the

* This statement represents correctly the General's intention at the time. As all the world knows now, the 42nd regiment landed, and the 23rd remained behind.

country is much better drained beyond that post. North of Dunquah there is everywhere a fall of tremendous rain at intervals of about thirty-six hours.

In the evening we had heavy rains, which delayed the dinner to which I was invited by Colonel Wood. My men had built me a shed, without walls, and the damp enclosed me like a garment on lying down. Though three fires burnt within six feet, their flames only appeared as a crimson glow, and the forms of my men, sleeping beside them, were quite invisible. In the middle of the night I was attacked by ants, who climbed the posts of my brush bedstead. Turning out in a hurry, it was the strangest scene before my eyes. No objects could be discerned at a yard's distance, so heavy lay the mist, but on every side showed a halo of fire. Next morning I set out on the back trail, after inspection of an electric fish just caught. No other specimen of this creature was taken, to my knowledge. Its shape stood somewhat between that of the eel and that of the golden carp; it had four long feelers at the mouth, and a smooth skin. When first brought out by Dr. Mosse's boys, the power of its shock was very severe. Even at the point of death, as I saw it, the electricity had not quite departed, and I was aware of a tingling too real to be quite pleasant on touching it. This specimen might have been eight inches long.

At Barraco Major Russell and his officers were in high delight over a despatch just received through Sir Garnet. It conveyed to them Her Majesty's thanks for their excellent

dispositions and gallant conduct in the engagement of Abrakrampa, when "for many hours consecutively they resisted the attack of greatly *inferior* numbers." Lord Gifford had charge of the transport arrangements at this post, and so well had he managed matters that not a box of stores was lying there. My men were by this time knocked up, and Lord Gifford's energy spoiled my success in recruiting amongst the loafers of the camp;—it appears incredible to relate, that there were no loafers at Barraco. But at the last moment, eight men turned up *en route* for Mansu, returning empty. These I promptly engaged, and set out for a night march. Very picturesque is a journey under such circumstances. The road was crowded, and all who travelled my way hastened to secure the mysterious protection that dwells under a white skin. At short intervals, a group of fires by the roadside showed the halting place of a convoy, who would be afoot long before dawn. So on through the night.

Beyond Yancoomassie Assin, next day, I met Lieutenant Knox, R.A., superintending the transport of a 7lb. gun, a howitzer of the same bore, and a Gatling. His men hauled them along in silence, breathing hard, and desperately impressed with the mysterious science of the whites. A heavy task had they, for the mud lay mid-leg deep. Before reaching Sutah, Lieutenant Mann, R.E., appeared, on his way to the Prah. To my complaint about the road in this neighbourhood, he informed me he had no orders to improve it beyond Mansu. At Sutah I found Captain Russell, Captain Brabazon,

Captain Paget, and another stranger. Captains Brabazon and Paget were on their way to join Butler, who had been commissioned to head the Akims in their projected invasion. Captain Butler's whereabouts is a mystery, but with light hearts these gentlemen have prepared to find him. By the bye, we have a funny tale of Captain Butler. In his hopeless errand of rousing the latent courage of Akim, he found himself harassed by the obstinate refusal of the Christian people to take up arms. Inquiring into this, it appeared that the pastor of these converts had urged them without ceasing to suffer anything rather than fight; no doubt they were eager to accept such palatable counsels. Captain Butler sent for the man, a native, and asked what he meant by his seditious preachings. Replied the hapless padre, "War is forbidden by my religion and yours. It is upon my conscience to denounce this invasion." The story goes that Captain Butler ordered him three dozen, but that I think improbable. What a deal of trouble and annoyance would have been saved if all the Akims had followed the teaching of this missionary, and flatly refused to serve!

Colonel Colley had arrived at Mansu, relieving Mr. Com. Elliot in the management of transport. He had already given proofs of that astonishing activity which conduced so much to the success of the expedition. Here also I first heard of Capt. Glover's altered plans. He abandons the hope of attacking Coomassie from the east, and is *en route* for a point on the Prah only 20 miles from Prahsu. The

1st W.I. are to garrison Cape Coast Castle and Elmina during the campaign. From Mansu the bearers who had been engaged at Barraco bolted into the bush for fear of impressment, and those of my own carriers who had kept up accompanied them. It is in this way that Fantees escape the fulfilment of their duty. I was warned by the incident not to pay any man his full wages until I wanted him no more.

At Yancoomassie Fantee, next day, a touching event occurred. A woman in my company, a slave, recognised her mother amongst a convoy of female carriers. They each cast down their burdens, and fell into one another's arms. They did not kiss, as we do—poor black wretches—but they sobbed and laughed with a catching breath, and gazed, face against face, with glistening eyes, and hugged again with a loving coo, so that, I swear, my very carriers ceased to grin. The pair had been captured by Ashantees seven years ago and separately sold.

Whilst sitting under a tree waiting for breakfast, a man crossed the road and offered me some fruit in a shamefaced manner. I thanked him, and he ran away, as if afraid I should give him money. My boys informed me the present was of *kola* nuts, the symbol of loyalty and friendship in West Africa. I tasted one; found it very bitter, and failed to observe that delicious sweetness which is said to follow the *aliquid amari*. The bystanders ate them greedily. This kola is also the "war nut" of Ashantee celebrated by Bow-

ditch. Its taste somewhat reminded me of *bettel*, and it has, probably, the same effect, gently stimulating, and paralysing to those nerves which give the hunger-pang.

Starting from Dunquah at 2.30 A.M. on Christmas Day, I reached Cape Coast Castle in time for breakfast, at 10 A.M. The preparations to celebrate this great festivity had been conspicuous in every camp, but the Fantees have no interest in the holiday. When I say the preparations had been conspicuous, don't think of holly or ivy, much more of mistletoe. Decorations there were none, but good plum-puddings in plenty. At Dunquah a banqueting hut had been erected, and a bullock secured for the roast beef. But Cape Coast cares little for Christmas. Its festival is the "Yam Custom," when the king of Ashantee celebrates the bloodiest of his massacres, and Fantee chiefs, debarred this gratification, get piously drunk in honour of new yams. Bunches of that lovely acacia, the "pride of Barbadoes," adorned the doorways of all Christian residents, but I observed no other sign. In the castle, and at private houses, there was such festivity as can be attained in this most miserable of all countries. Have I mentioned elsewhere that the wealthiest people of Cape Coast are reduced not unfrequently to dine on salt pork or Australian meat? It is true. No animals will live except native sheep and goats, the former of which can scarcely be distinguished from its companion, the dog. These creatures, and fowls, exist in some numbers, but they are not killed frequently. Unless a

merchant keep his own sheep and his own poultry he will often be reduced to straits for meat. And when killed, ye gods, what studies of osteology are they! Like no flesh of earth is Cape Coast mutton. It has a taste combined of horn, shrimps, and a wet dishcloth, for those who have time and energy to explore its character.

Cape Coast Castle,
Dec. 27th, 6.30 A.M.

I have just seen Sir Garnet depart for the invading campaign. At 3.30 A.M. the Naval Brigade, under Captain Blake, R.N., began to embark, half an hour before the time appointed. A few minutes' delay was caused by this precipitation, for the boats of the 'Encounter' were not ready to assist. By 4.45 the entire force, with baggage loaded up and eager for the march, formed on the beach. Exactly at five o'clock gun it halted in front of Government House; a few seconds sufficed to complete all formalities, and then the head of our column fairly began the march to Coomassie. By the admirable promptitude of all persons concerned, the Naval Brigade, 208 in number, with fifteen officers, will reach its halting place at Inquabim, or Aquapim, as some call it, before the sun has much oppressive power. An hour afterwards, punctual to five minutes, Sir Garnet himself started in his man-carriage, with Colonel Greaves, chief of the staff, Major Baker, and Captain Huyshe, Captain Brackenbury, Military Secretary; Lieutenant Maurice, Private Secretary; Hon. Mr. Wood, aide-de-camp, and the other members of the staff, left last night,

sleeping at Inquabim. They rode mules that came from Madeira by the 'Lilian,' wretched beasts, one of which, however, found *nous* and energy sufficient to pitch its rider comically in mid-street. Little excitement was caused by the general's departure. The sailors had passed through before the town had fairly wakened up, and it did not appear to know that this was the final and definite start for Coomassie. The merchants of Cape Coast, however, the representatives of those large firms which trade here, assembled to do honour to the General who has already done so much to restore their prosperity. He travels in his carriage as far as Akroful, where the forest becomes so lofty as to shade the road. From thence, to-morrow morning, he and all his staff will travel on foot, by the regular stages, to the Prah. Going thus slowly, they will take six days at least to cover the distance I lately traversed in two and a half. But the example of their General will do wonders to invigorate their men. At Prahsu the staff is expected to wait until the last division of white troops arrive, about the 13th prox. But it has been whispered to me that if our scouts make the report expected, viz., that the Ashantees have not yet occupied the Adansi Hills in force, a dash may be made to frustrate them. Wood's and Russell's regiment, with the Naval Brigade to back them, would doubtless be equal to this daring venture. But I give the report as one without authority. Sir Garnet keeps his secrets well, and so do his staff officers. An attempt of this nature is

one to be only revealed to a public thousands of miles away.

Yesterday the long expected attack on Chamah took place. The natives of that treacherous town had partly rebuilt it after the bombardment, and they still gave shelter to the 300 Ashantees sent to buy powder four months ago. In fact, the escape of this detachment has become almost hopeless. The Wassaws and Comenda people keep watch day and night in the bush around Chamah. The general himself went down thither on the 23rd to carry the attacking force of Comendas across the Prah, and to see the fight which did not come off. Yesterday, however, our allies advanced, drove the enemy from their town, and burnt it a second time. The details of the action are not yet known: but there was some loss of life amongst the Comendas. In the house opposite to that in which I live, a dismal wailing and outcry gave us the first intimation of the engagement. The young owner, a Comenda man by birth, had been shot dead, and his grandmother, mother, wives, children, and slaves had begun the "custom." They came out of the house, wringing their hands and lamenting. Chalked over the forehead and the upper arm, they screamed aloud the virtues of the deceased, with sad gesticulation, wailed themselves till nature gave way, and then fell prone, covering their faces. One young girl I saw who found the opportunity a good one for indulging her love of the dance. She waved her arms, and flourished, and swayed her lithe body in such rhythmic contortions as

never grief assumed. I know that girl was just enjoying herself, and, no doubt, her young man stood not far off. A few words from the police put a sudden stop to the mourning, which would otherwise have gone on for weeks, with the accompaniment of much rum and tobacco. The noise disturbed our poor fellows in hospital. While this attack on Chamah was taking place, the 'Active' bombarded another hostile settlement to the Eastward. At evening the Comendas begged to be taken back across the river, which was done. I suppose the blockade of the bush will be continued until the Wassaws muster courage to meet their enemies in face.

The 'Amethyst' returned yesterday from Ascension, bringing sad news. The Hon. Mr. Charteris, late aide-de-camp, died two days after leaving this coast, of fever. Lieut. Wells, R.N., whose rapid judgment and determination proved so effective in the battle of Elmina, and who commanded the naval force at Abrakrampa, died on his way home to take up his appointment to the Queen's yacht. Yellow fever is making incredible ravages down the coast, but a strict quarantine is kept here. No case is known to have ever happened in Cape Coast, though the "rivers" are yearly infested with it. On the other hand, new faces abound. By the 'Sarmatian,' which brought out the 42nd regiment, came Brig. Gen. Sir A. Alison, Bart, C.B.; Col. Greaves, now chief of the staff; Lt. Col. Colley, who has taken the Transport in charge; Major Maclean, Rifle Brigade; Capt. Duncan, R.A.; Capt. Hon. P. Methuen, Scots Fusiliers;

Capt. Paget, ditto; Capt. F. Russell, 14th Hussars; Capt. Russell, 12th Lancers; Lieut. Macgregor, 50th regiment; and Lieut. Vander Meulen, ditto; Lieut. Fitzgerald, Rifle Brigade; Lieut. Knox, R.A.; and Lieut. de Houghton, 2nd bat., 10th foot. With them came also Rev. Mr. Kirkwood, Presbyterian chaplain. To-day has arrived the mail of the 'Soudan,' which vessel had almost been given up. She broke down off Teneriffe, and her passengers had a fortnight's run ashore. The vessels of the "Union" line have begun their promised call. The 'Anglian' came in on the 15th instant, and took away some invalids and the mail.

Capt. Glover is supposed to have already set out for the Prah, after reducing the Ahwoonahs to subjection; but we have no intelligence later than his departure for that purpose. Capt. Butler has returned to Akim, whither several officers, detached for that service, are deviously following. The Akims will form a third column of invasion, and will march between Glover's force and ours, crossing the Prah on their own line. The advance is expected to take place simultaneously, about the 15th prox. Our bridge will probably be begun and finished on the 5th prox. The river is reported to be 13½ feet deep in the middle, a much greater depth than had been anticipated. But since the measurement was taken, we hear of a fall of two feet. The engineers in charge are Major Home and Capt. Buckle, and in such energetic hands there is small chance of delay. The telegraph had been completed nearly to Akroful, when I passed through on the morning of the

25th. Laying it was slow work, whilst to plant poles was needful; but when once it has reached the forest the wire can be passed from tree to tree with the greatest rapidity. From Dunquah to the Prah may be laid in four days, or less, if necessary.

The following memorandum has been issued by Sir Garnet:—

The Major-General Commanding has made the following notes for the information and guidance of the soldiers and sailors about to take part in the operations north of the river Prah:

Health.—The climate is much better and more pleasant in the interior than on the seashore, and if ordinary precautions are taken there is no reason why any of the troops should suffer in health during the few weeks that they may have to remain in the country.

The officers must see that tea or chocolate with a little biscuit is provided for their men every morning before marching, and quinine will be served out by the medical officers.

During the heat of the day, or when marching late in the morning, commanding officers may, at their discretion, allow the patrol-jackets to be taken off and carried by the men. These can be easily carried, slung behind under the waist-belt. Immediately that the march is over, or if any long halt takes place, these jackets must be put on, for a chill when the body is heated is, above all things, to be avoided.

The following maxims should be impressed upon the men:

First. Never allow the body to suffer a chill, and there will not be much chance of your ever being sick.

Second. Never expose the head uncovered to the sun, and when halting or on sentry get into the shade if possible.

Third. When camping for the night, do your best to construct a raised sleeping-place, even a few inches off the ground. Examine the camps of the

Ashantees on the road to the Prah, and copy their plan of making bedsteads. They are easily and quickly made; and sleeping off the ground is a great preservative of health.

Fourth. If any irregularities of the bowels is experienced, go at once to the doctor for a dose. Never drink water until you have filtered it. The operations beyond the Prah will last only a few weeks; and the Major-General relies on the manliness of the soldiers and sailors to keep them out of hospital as long as they have strength to march. The battalion that is composed of the best men and that is best looked after by its officers will send the fewest sick men to the rear.

Mode of Fighting.—The theatre of operations will be a great forest of gigantic trees, in an undergrowth of bush varying in thickness. At some places men can get through the bush in skirmishing order; at others they will have to use the sword-bayonet to open paths for themselves. All the fighting will be in skirmishing order, the files being two, three, or four paces apart, according to circumstances. When once thus engaged in a fight in the bush, officers commanding battalions, and even officer's commanding companies, will find it difficult to exercise much control over the men. For this reason it is essential that the tactical unit should be as small as possible. Every company will therefore be at once divided into four sections, and each section will be placed under the command of an officer or non-commissioned officer. These sections, once told off, are not on any account to be broken up during the war, nor are the commanders to be changed except under extraordinary circumstances, and then only by order of the officer commanding the battalion. All details of duty will be performed by sections, or, when only very small guards or piquets are required, by half sections. In action, as a general rule, the three sections only of each company will be extended, and the fourth will form a support in rear of the centre of the company's skirmishing line, and a from 40 to 80 yards from it. Care must be taken that the support never loses sight of its own skirmishers, and that it conforms to their movements, but its commander must never allow it to become mixed up with the skirmishers unless it is ordered forward by the officer commanding the company,

The captain will always be with the skirmishing line, exercising a general control over it, and as the enemy only fight in loose skirmishing order, it will seldom be necessary to bring forward the support into the skirmishing line. Fighting in the bush is very much like fighting by twilight, no one can see farther than a few files to the right or left. Great steadiness and self-confidence are therefore required from every one engaged. The Ashantees always employ the same tactics. Being superior in numbers, they encircle their enemy's flanks by long thin lines of skirmishers, hoping thereby to demoralise their opponents. The men engaged in our front line should not concern themselves about these flank attacks. They must have the same confidence in their General that he has in them, and depend upon him to take the necessary measures for meeting all such attacks either in flank or rear. Each soldier must remember that with his breechloader he is equal to at least twenty Ashantees, wretchedly armed as they are with old flint muskets, firing slugs or pieces of stone, that do not hurt badly at more than forty or fifty yards' range. Our enemies have neither guns nor rockets, and have a superstitious dread of those used by us.

In action the two comrades forming each file must always keep together, and the officers and non-commissioned officers commanding sections will use their utmost endeavours to keep their sections from mixing up with those on their right and left. If during the advance into the bush, fire is unexpectedly opened by the enemy concealed behind cover, the men will immediately drop on the knee behind trees or any cover that may be at hand, pausing well before delivering their fire, and taking care to fire low at the spots from which the enemy were seen to fire. All firing against a concealed enemy should be slow, and officers and non-commissioned officers in command of sections must spare no efforts to prevent the men from wasting their ammunition. It must be explained to the men that, owing to the difficulties of transport, the supply of ammunition beyond the Prah will be very limited, and that every shot fired which is not deliberately aimed, not only encourages the enemy, who would soon learn to despise a fire that did them no injury, but seriously affects the efficiency of the force,

for if ammunition were to run short, a stop would be put to our further advance.

The Major-General must rely upon the intelligence of the soldiers and sailors to husband their ammunition without any efforts from the officers being required.

The advance will be made along narrow paths, where the men can only march in file, and sometimes only single file. When an action commences, the troops on the centre path will deploy to the front into skirmishing order, either to the right or left of the path, as ordered, upon the leading file. The rear section of each company will always form the support, and officers commanding companies will be careful to lead these deployments, so that their front may always be as nearly as possible at right angles to the path they had been marching upon. All officers must remember that the front line will, as a general rule, face north by west, and when at any distance from the path they must guide the direction of their advance by compass. Officers commanding battalions and companies will not order any bugle-call to be sounded in camp or on the march north of the Prah except to repeat those sounded on the main road by order of the Major-General Commanding, and these, if preceded by any special regimental call, will be repeated only by the battalion concerned, and by any battalion that may be operating between the main road and the corps indicated by the call. When any call is not preceded by regimental call, it will be repeated by every bugler within hearing, except those that may be on duty with the baggage guard. Whenever the advance and double is sounded, it is to be understood to order a general advance of the whole front line upon the enemy. The men will then advance, cheering, at a fast walk, making short rushes whenever the nature of the ground will allow of their being made. All such advances will be preceded by a heavy fire of guns and rockets. On reaching a clearing, in the course of an action, or when the enemy is in the immediate neighbourhood, the troops will not cross over the open space until the clearing has been turned, and the bush on both sides of it has been occupied. When once a position has been gained, it is to be held resolutely. In warfare of this nature there must be no retreats. No village

or camp is to be set on fire except by order of the Major-General commanding Officers and men are reminded of the danger and delay which occur if a village is set on fire before all the ammunition and baggage have made their way through it. All plundering and unnecessary destruction of property are to be strictly repressed. Officers are held responsible that when a village or camp is occupied their men are kept together, and prevented from dispersing to seek plunder. The importance of kindness from all ranks to the friendly natives who are employed as carriers cannot be too strongly urged. If the carriers are ill-treated, troops run imminent risk of being left without food and ammunition.

It must never be forgotten by our soldiers that Providence has implanted in the heart of every native of Africa a superstitious awe and dread of the white man, that prevents the negro from daring to meet us face to face in combat. A steady advance or a charge, no matter how partial, made with determination, always means the retreat of the enemy. Although, when at a distance, and even when under a heavy fire, the Ashantees seem brave enough from their practice of yelling and singing, and beating drums in order to frighten the enemies of their own colour, with whom they are accustomed to make war, they will not stand against the advance of the white man. English soldiers and sailors are accustomed to fight against immense odds in all parts of the world. It is scarcely necessary to remind them that when, in our battles beyond the Prah, they find themselves surrounded on all sides by hordes of howling enemies, they must rely upon their own British courage and discipline, and upon the courage of their comrades. Soldiers and sailors, remember that the black man holds you in superstitious awe. Be cool, fire low, and charge home; and the more numerous your enemy, the greater will be the loss inflicted upon him, and the greater your honour in defeating him.

By order,

G. R. Greaves, Colonel, Chief of the Staff.

Head-quarters, Cape Coast Castle, December 20th, 1873.

On December 29th the 1st West India Regiment landed

from the Manitoba, and took up its quarters on Connor's and Barnes' Hills. It looks very spruce and neat, a real "Pride of Barbadoes," where the route found it. Our 2nd W.I. invalids observe with equal jealousy and scorn the snow-white jackets, vests of undimmed scarlet, and spotless gaiters, which mark their new-landed comrades. But it is intended to furnish both these black regiments with the "Ashantee uniform," helmet and all. Surely, those who devised this scheme never beheld a negro. I have seen a soldier of the 1st W.I. in his new clothing. The man was well enough for stature and bearing. In the old uniform I have no doubt he looked picturesque, and even martial. But no monkey that ever begged copper for an organ boy, presented an appearance more ridiculous than did this specimen soldier in helmet and suit of grey. One looked behind him for the string. The man was ashamed and angry; well he might be.

Sir A. Alison's aides-de-camp are gazetted, Captain Russell, and Lieut. Maurice Fitzgerald, Rifle Brigade. The officers appointed to aid Butler in his command of the Akims, are Captain Paget, S. F. G.; Captain Brabazon, late G.G., and Lieut. Fitzgerald, 50th Regiment. They have already left to seek their commanding officer, and two of them had already reached Sutah, when I met them on the 23rd instant. The Gatling gun left behind at Dunquah has arrived at this place for repairs.

On the 30th the 'Simoom' returned from a cruise

bringing word of the death of Captain Townsend, 16th Regiment. The 'Barracouta' gave some alarm at this time. She should have been back long since, and the fear is that yellow fever has broken out on board. Great anxiety in official circles about the transport. It begins to be hinted by persons in authority that we may not impossibly break down at the Prah. Women carriers complain of the rations. They get 1lb. of rice *per diem,* which is a sufficient quanity; rice, however, is asserted to give them all sorts of derangement. They ask for maize, but unless we are prepared to carry grinding stones also, maize would be useless. Indeed, we haven't any to distribute. The Chamah people still hold out, and will do so until we take Coomassie, I dare say. An amusing proof of the change of spirit in Elmina was given to Captain Lees yesterday. The General requested him to forward a message to the Ashantee chiefs in Chamah by some of the disloyal townsmen of Elmina. Captain Lees forwarded the order to Helden, who tried to execute it. But, happy spot! there are no disloyal townsmen of Elmina at this present time! Chiefs who had notoriously turned out with the Ashantees, and had drunk themselves blind in toasts against English rule, proved to be intensely loyal *per se,* and did not even enjoy the acquaintance of any person of different sentiments.

Jan. 1*st.* At two o'clock this morning the boats of the fleet, towed by steam cutters, under orders of Lieutenant Pollard, of Her Majesty's ship 'Simoom,' were ranged in

order alongside the 'Himalaya.' Until within forty-eight hours it was still under discussion whether the 42nd or Rifles should be first put ashore. The latter were finally preferred, on the ground of a slight outbreak of erysipelas in the former regiment. As soon as the boats came alongside, the men, all ready and waiting, stepped into them. There was very little swell, and a moon so bright that lanterns were unnecessary. Moorings had been laid down at the edge of the surf by Captain Crohan, R.N., who had charge of the debarkation. As fast as the laden boats arrived they were assigned moorings, to which they held until the surf-boats came to tranship their men. Not a hitch of any sort took place, and so prompt had everybody been that by 3.30 A.M. the troops were *en route* for Inquabim. They were 360 rank and file, under the command of Colonel Warren. The other half of the battalion lands to-morrow at the same hour, and the last detachment of the 42nd will be ashore on the 4th inst. Starting precisely at 3.30 A.M., the sun was scarcely risen when the day's halt took place at the huts of Inquabim. Only one man fell out—a sergeant of Engineers—who had been strongly advised by his officers not to risk this climate. The regimental transport service worked quite smoothly under Sub-Lieutenant Filliter, and that gentleman has returned to supervise the arrangements for to-morrow's detachment. Whilst I write the 'Victor Emanuel' hospital ship is arriving in the roads. A noble fleet we have at anchor—twenty-three steamers and four sailing vessels.

All the news from the front is intercepted on its way by Sir Garnet, who will probably reach the Prah to-morrow. The telegraph has been laid as far as Yancoomassie Fantee; but the supply of wire is nearly exhausted. Fortunately, there is an ample store on board the 'Dromedary,' which has begun to unload. In the short distance already set up there have been two accidents caused by the fall of trees across the line, and I noticed several trunks half cut through, with no apparent object, by the road-cutters. They were all a foot or two from the edge of the track, and perhaps the mysterious commands of the fetish have enjoined the operation. There is no suspicion of malice. The people here care no more about the telegraph, and feel no more curiosity about it, than any other marvel of science which makes no noise. The traction engines work all day at their useful task of sawing boards, but no one now stops to admire their panting and puffing. Even residents of the coast had hoped that our inventions would excite the Fantees to some curiosity, some interest, but it is not so. They will stare and shriek at a steam-engine or a Gatling gun when working, so long as it is a novelty; but all these things are classed as "white man's fetish," and there is an end to the matter. An incredible apathy and a shameless cowardice are the leading features of the Fantee character. There is again an alarm about carriers, and it seems very doubtful whether we shall be able to get 4000 labourers across the Prah without more vigorous compulsion. With less than this number Sir Garnet can

scarcely hope to move. Every village round is crammed with refugees from Cape Coast. My own hammock men, who were engaged for the duration of the war, have run away, and others have been engaged. Three were pressed by the police before I could get them passes, and the rest have vanished. I have sent to Anamaboo to raise men, but if my messenger comes back without them, there will be no choice but to march on foot, which is a most undesirable method of travelling in the tropics for a newspaper correspondent, who should always endeavour to elude the laws of physics and be in two or three places at one time. Fear of the Ashantees is an instinct of the Fantee breast, and the terrors of that land beyond the Prah prove too much for his very small store of moral courage. Here again the women show themselves the better men. They are willing to follow us anywhere, and it seems not at all unlikely that we may have to fall back upon female pluck for labour; but if it actually happened so, be sure the men would feel no shame. That honest quality has no place in their hearts.

In the absence of news from the front the wildest rumours circulate. We hear that King Koffee has sent an embassy for peace, with the promise of an enormous ransom. I doubt whether this monarch and his home-staying counsellors have yet learned the lesson of our superiority. That the men who fought with us on this side the Prah will easily be brought to make another fight I cannot believe; but we are quite ignorant of the Ashantee resources. It is to be observed, how-

ever, that our march to Coomassie lies far to the west of those provinces named in the War Office's notes as being most populous and warlike. The inhabitants know enough of Englishmen to be aware that if they leave us alone, it is very improbable that we should step aside to injure them, and the chances are that they will leave King Koffee to his fate. I learn that King Gaman, the bitterest and most inveterate of Ashantee enemies, was invited by the General to co-operate with our invasion on his first landing, and this makes more probable the rumour of his attack from the north-west. No answer has been received from the King, but it may be that he differs so very far from the Fantee character as to prefer deeds to words.

Captain Butler has by this time received the three officers sent to aid him in the effort to stir the Akims to activity. The Akims will form our centre column of invasion, crossing the Prah midway between Captain Glover's force and our own—that is, if they can be persuaded to cross at all; for I hear ominous reports of hanging back. The reader will remember Captain Butler's opinion of this tribe given some time since—an opinion formed, it is true, whilst desperately ill with fever, and after a hasty survey. "Give me Fantees for choice," exclaimed that officer to me, at Mansu. The Akims may be just brave enough to defend their own territory, but they are the reverse of enterprising.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CAMP AT THE PRAH.

Sixty Hours Asleep—A Sudden Awakening—Wood's Regiment Transformed into Carriers—Gambling at Barraco—Prahsu—A Changed Scene—Incredible Loss amongst Engineers—Lord Gifford takes Command of the Scouts—The Ashantee Envoys; suicide and Burial of the Younger—Curious Custom—A Brush with the Scouts—The Deadlock on the Road—Treachery of Kings and Chiefs—Death of a 2nd W.I. Soldier under his Load—The Naval Brigade at Work—Advance of Major Russell—The Envoys and their Cannibal Guard—The Harmattan Wind—Experiments in Gun Cotton with Major Home—Leopards on the Trail—Medical Comforts Arrive—Surgeon R. W. Lowe—The Alligator and the Elephant—Alarm of Fire—Kossu Savagery—A Snake under the Chair—Arrival of Mr. Kühne—Colonel Webber crosses the Prah—Interview with Mr. Kühne—Life of Prisoners in Coomassie—Preaching—Return of Amanquattiah's Army—Its Losses—Fall of the Fetish Tree—Majestic Appearance of the King—The Queen Mother—Decline of the Ashantee Power—False Returns of Population—The Sacred Treasure—The War Record of Coomassie—Government a mere Despotism—The 42nd Regiment carries its Baggage—The 23rd recalled from Akroful—Treatment of Correspondents—Weariness of the Camp—Resolve to Start for Outposts.

On the evening of the 31st December I went to sleep, and the events taking place from that time till the morn-

ing of January 3rd remain in my recollection only as broken visions. I suffered no particular pain or inconvenience unless disturbed. In the afternoon of the 1st, during a lucid interval, I decided to get away from the coast, and gave orders accordingly, before dozing off. Next day, at 4 A.M., I was sleeping in my hammock. There abides a recollection of white faces and piled arms at Inquabim and Akroful, and I seem to have been conscious of gratitude to Mr. Commissary Hamilton, at Dunquah, who let me sleep on his bed whilst the men rested. Through to Yancoomassie I travelled in stupor, ate dinner, and went to sleep again. It was at 4 A.M. next morning that I woke up, rather suddenly. It had been a night march. Three miles from Mansu, my hammock split lengthwise, and laid me in the mud, a heap of pillows, pistols, pouches, and perplexity. It was a morning very wet and misty, even as wet and mist are estimated at Mansu. The day had not yet broken, and by lantern light, up to the ankle in mud, under the dripping trees, I pursued the task of mending my hammock. Suddenly, whilst I stood over it, my boy Yarboro began to dance and stamp. Another instant—I felt some creature rush up my legs, up the tail of my puggeree, to my head, where it squatted. One mad demonstration sent puggeree and cap a-flying. They struck one of my naked boys in the chest, and he also began to dance and stamp. The creature no doubt, was some venomous spider of the largest size, who

dropped first upon Yarboro, then ran to my head, and was pitched headlong against the third of us. Venomous he must have been, for Yarboro's leg and the carrier's chest were both inflamed by the mere touch. My clothes protected me. Thus, and by the fall aforesaid, I was awakened.

At Mansu were found Mr. Commissary Nugent, slightly better than when I saw him last; Mr. Richardson, just recovering; Lieutenant Winter, 33rd, very ill; Lieutenant Graves down with dysentery. A lively and a hopeful camp it was under such circumstances. Mr. Commissary Elliot had not hitherto had time to fall ill, but now, when his responsibility was to some extent removed, he speedily gave way to an attack of the greatest virulence. What a country is this which comfortable journalists, who sit at home and write leaders, would have us retain! There is a point, I take it, at which philanthropy becomes hateful cruelty, a crime before Heaven and men. That point is reached by those who insist upon our retention of this coast. No sanitary measures can make the country healthful. The most expensive and most efficient drainage would scarcely lower a death rate that stands at 25 per cent. per annum: one person in every four, that is, each year. It is proved by a thousand melancholy instances that we *cannot* live in the country. What exceptions to this rule may be found are men of a constitution most unusual in England. To send an official to West Africa is to send him to death. I would the people of Eng-

land could be induced to recollect this one axiom, and by it alone, with no other words, to answer the heartless arguments arranged by an unthinking journalist. It is urged, there are men who will risk the climate and do the necessary work—"One down, another comes on." This is true, for poverty is the strongest of all compelling powers. But does the magistrate pass the plea of poverty when some wretch comes before him on charge of attempted suicide? I assert that the cases are alike. Easier and simpler, nine times in ten, the death by prussic acid or a razor, and not more certain. Is it for Christian England to follow the Chinese example, and bribe a man to suffer death by promise of meagre pensions to his family? This is no parallel case with that of officers called out for some dangerous service, as selfish fanatics attempt to argue. An officer goes to serve his country, and with that object he willingly risks existence. But our country has no interests to serve in West Africa, nor any duty on which she dares stake an English life. If we have a duty there, it is that of converting the heathen; but would any man propose to *order* out a body of clergymen, or even to invite them on terms of this or nothing? And the officer goes not to certain death, as does the poor fellow accepting an appointment at Sierra Leone or Cape Coast. A final point lies in the question of our utility. I have told something of the civilisation and good government we have established, and before closing this book the reader will find more evidence. Our occupation of the coast heretofore has been a failure; to persevere in the

same course will be a crime. I have just seen it urged that we should cling to the Gold Coast because the Emperor Hadrian, 1600 years ago, abandoned his predecessor's conquests in Central Asia. After all, this argument is as much to the point as any of Mr. Hanbury's or Mr. Ginx Jenkins'.

At Mansu the news is of an embassy from the king. It consists of two nobles, each wearing a gold breastplate. We do not hear what propositions they brought, but Sir Garnet is taking time to answer. Russell's regiment, which I left at Barraco, crosses the river to-day or to-morrow. At Yancoomassie Assin, on the 4th, I saw the 2nd W.I. march in, carrying their own ammunition boxes. Barraco showed me a sight more extraordinary still next day. Whilst I sat at breakfast, all Wood's regiment came filing down from the front, the officers riding mules. It had been found needful to transform all their soldiers into carriers, and to employ combatant officers, attached to a fighting corps, into nigger drivers. They were to travel backwards and forwards, between Barraco and Prahsu, for a fortnight. Even the 2nd W.I., who are regularly enrolled in her Majesty's service, were "invited" to carry, and they did so. But as the tale goes on, it will be seen that the 42nd Highlanders had to do porter's work. It is true they volunteered, and the experiment was tried only once. It produced a startling result in fever.

The carriers attached to this station were positively bewildered by their sudden wealth. Having no idea of a legitimate

use to which it might be put, they plunged madly into gambling. Houssas and Kossus have always been addicted to this practice, but, in the history of the world, Fantees have now for the first time an opportunity to taste its joys. They seem to like it much. Every night a crowd assembles on the edge of the forest, and there, under the bright sky, by the glimmer of a lantern, they play some mysterious game which stirs their very blood. On the evening before I arrived, the Assins made such a row that the police were ordered to surround and arrest the gamblers. They did so—a bolt ensued—the lantern was kicked over; and of all the piles of money, only four florins fell into the hands of justice. Ten shillings each the two headmen paid up as a fine. Meanwhile, the Kossus drum and dance, as they always do; and the Houssas, when present, make night hideous by ballads and drum-songs in honour of the moon, especially when she is "new." So far have the superstitions of Islam penetrated these negro hearts.

Prahsu, January 6.

It is but a fortnight since I described this place, but what a change in the scene! Our gipsy camp under the trees around the half-obliterated redoubt of 1863, is transformed to a sylvan town, with streets mathematically laid out, barracks squared by the compass, tents designed on the purest principles of science, and palisadoes erected according to the dictates of philosophy. That cleared space I told of, which was a wilderness of bush piled up and smouldering,

of fallen trunks, of mounds, pitfalls, and ancient waterways, is now a neat and elegant plaza, faced on one side by pretty huts. There dwell the General and his staff. On the other lie those vast sheds in which our countrymen will lodge. In one corner a small but sufficient space is allotted to the press, where we may build our shanties or pitch our tents as taste inclines, but always with subordination to the pure principles of science and the virtues of the rectangle. Along each side the plaza is a double row of tents, evidently pitched as an example of what may be done by an earnest and laborious student of the rectangular principle. Next to this sacred ground, descending to the river, is the engineers' yard, where piles of bill-hooks, pyramids of axes, picks, cutlasses, and testudines of spades, invite the wary native to his labour. Then one comes to the artillery camp, protected by a fence from the intrusion of such vulgar as care not to wear Rait's uniform, nor to profit by the instruction of Lieutenant Saunders. Most vigorously are such expelled if by an evil chance they wander near our pretty ordnance. Beyond this area lies the camp just vacated by Russell's regiment, gone to Attobiassi, and beyond this again that of Wood's regiment, all turned into carriers for a while. They are still much as I left them, save that the bush has been quite cleared away. The tents are pitched with some reference to the compass, and the mess huts are more ornamental. At the back of these a broad road runs, dividing the officers' quarter from the men's. Their sheds, now empty, line it to the left un-

til it abruptly ceases on the bush. Very picturesque indeed is the little wide vista of forest thus opened. In the ruddy glow of sunset yesterday the shadows in its foliage were most deliciously and coolly blue. At the back of the regimental sheds is another large square, neatly lined with huts and barracks, now occupied apparently by carriers and camp-followers; and then the varied greens, white boles, smooth sweep of leaves, and smoky shadows of the mysterious forest. The bridge was finished yesterday, but not in time for the passage of Major Russell's regiment, who were paddled over on a pontoon raft and in the big canoe left here by the Ashantees. The bridge stands on seven tressels, five of them a solid structure of logs. The river has fallen several feet in the dry weather that has now begun; its current also has much slackened. But to bridge such a stream would be creditable work, with the means at Major Home's disposal, in any climate. How hard and how trying is the labour our engineers, officers and men alike go through, is most miserably proved by the list of their casualties. Major Home and Captain Buckle have been struck down again and again with fever. The former was lately invalided to Cape Coast, where he lay prostrate, but even in this extremity he retained such self-control as to quell that fretting over lost time which might have retarded his recovery. He gave our excellent staff-surgeon (Dr. M'Nalty) a limited time in which to cure him, with a warning that he should leave the castle on that day, well or ill. True to his word, he went back to the front at

the appointed time, and resumed all his accustomed energy. Of five officers, Major Home, Captain Buckle, Lieutenants Bell, Mann, and Skinner, only the first three are left in a state for work. Mr. Skinner has been here about a week, and is already obliged to return. Of Mr. Mann, to whom I have often referred as our road-maker, a most melancholy account reached me on arrival. This energetic and popular young officer is very ill with dysentery, the most dreaded of all complaints; but I am happy to say that this morning's report is very much more favourable, and it is hoped he has turned the corner. Of six sergeants of Engineers who came out by the 'Roquelle,' the steamer following the 'Ambriz,' one is dead, and four invalided to St. Helena. Six more came out by the next mail, the 'Bonny,' of whom three have already given in; but we may reasonably hope that with the departure of the rains our list of sick will gradually shorten.

Lieutenant Grant has yielded the charge of the scouts of Lieutenant Lord Gifford, whom I frequently mentioned at the battle of Abrakrampa. Under his direction they have been re-organised, consisting now of six men from each company of Russell's regiment. A duty of great honour and of extraordinary peril is that voluntarily undertaken by Lord Gifford. The Ashantees are no mean enemy, and it is to be expected that they will show much greater enterprise in defending their own homes than in securing their foreign conquests. The first telegram addressed from this side of

Mansu has arrived. It brings news that the 42nd are at a standstill, owing to the lack of carriers. The Ashantee envoys turn out to be no great personages. He with the gold breastplate appears to be one of the Court criers; and the other, whose fate I shall shortly tell, was probably of less distinction. They brought down a letter, written by the Fantee prisoner, Dawson, addressed to Colonel Harley, whom they expected still to find governing the coast, and their surprise was not small to observe our camp and our preparations for invasion. The letter was one of inquiry. The king wished to know why white men are leading on his enemies—an abstract question which most people would be puzzled to answer. The king pointed out that in the victory his generals had gained at Faisowah—a victory not to be contested, for had he not the tent captured and Mr. Richmond's preserved milk safe in Coomassie?—no attempt had been made to pursue, and this showed his good will; but why did we attack him at all? To this curious epistle Sir Garnet set himself to reply, and in the meanwhile the envoys were shown round the camp, and, amongst other things, the Gatling gun was fired in their honour. Our Naval Brigade, also, was pointed out as a first detachment of the white troops coming. The sights and the news were too much for the younger envoy, who shot himself the same night and was buried yesterday. It may be he feared some horrible fate, either at our hands or those of the king, or it is just possible he devoted himself to the fetish. Such deeds have been done by patriotic

Ashantees. The elder ambassador was invited to be present at his funeral, and crossed the river for that purpose. He seemed greatly pleased to hear that we proposed paying such honour to the corpse, and conducted himself with the utmost propriety whilst the proceedings lasted. These Ashantees really seem to be a superior people. When the grave was dug, and the body placed therein, the survivor made a sign to pause. He stepped to the pit's mouth, looked at his friend awhile, then stooped, and solemnly cast a little earth upon the dead. In this he was imitated by the two chief persons of his suite. One of the bystanders asked if that was an Ashantee custom, or had it been learned from white men? It was gravely replied to him that such had ever been the practice of their ancestors. In regard to the cause of death there are many reports.

The surviving envoy and his suite, who were with the man, declare that they endeavoured to dissuade him, but in vain. They have it that he feared torture and death at our hands. However it be, he died by his own deed, having put his chin upon the muzzle of his gun. So bad was the powder, however, that the slugs failed to pierce his skull. The survivor, a little, low fat man, left this morning with Sir Garnet's answer. Sailors were sent across some time before, and marched a mile or two inland to assure the messenger that white men had actually invaded Ashantee. Beyond the sailors he would come to Russell's regiment, encamped at Attobiassi, and beyond them again on his route lie the scouts

—thirty or forty in number—under Lord Gifford. By the bye, his lordship's force drew the first blood last night, the 5th. They came upon a party of hostile scouts, and exchanged shots with them. An Ashantee was killed on the spot. Later in the afternoon, whilst our men were cutting bush for the bivouac, one was suddenly shot from the cover and badly hurt. We are expecting his return by the hammock sent for him. I must speak again of that sickening subject, the transport—sickening, I call it, not only as a subject that turns up *ad nauseam,* but as one disgusting to any man who wishes to believe that the Fantees are our black brothers. Things are approaching a deadlock; the 23rd Regiment cannot land as yet, owing to the want of carriers; the 42nd, after getting as far as Yancoomassie-Fantee, is obliged to stop there an indeterminate time for the same reason; so with the Rifles who stand still at Barraco and Yancoomassie-Assin. There is a block at each station on the road. Wood's regiment, which ought to be doing important service at the front, has been obliged to lay down its arms and travel as a gang of carriers between Yancoomassie-Assin and Prahsu, with English officers at its head. The 2nd West India went down to-day to help; and it is most creditable to this corps, which has fought gallantly throughout the war, that they undertook a duty of such degrading sort without a word of grumbling. The West Indians are not used to carry a load upon their heads any more than are white soldiers. They would suffer almost as much as would our men in such a case; but these

fine fellows, who know themselves to have been so long despised and ridiculed, are ready for any service always. The other day, at Mansu, the detachment leaving there, observing the difficulty of our officers in transporting their ammunition, gallantly volunteered to carry it themselves, and did so, each lifting a box of 420 rounds, besides the sixty which was their proper load, and besides their rifles and equipments for heavy marching order. Is it not incredible, as it is infamous, that we should be reduced to such straits? In this populous country, for which we have come to fight, the people will not take a step to help us, and chiefs and kings show as far as they dare their determination to give no aid. Out of a hundred instances in my note-book, I select one or two. The King of Assin at Prahsu was ordered to turn out his men under Sir Garnet's own eye. He sent in twenty-five. At 3 A.M. his camp was quietly surrounded, and a party went to search the huts. A bolt ensued, and at dawn 125 prisoners paraded whom he had wished to hide. The former King of Abrakrampa promised 600 men, and sent 150. At the news of his death these men were allowed to return, for "custom." When that ceremony was complete, they showed a laudable anxiety to get back to their duty. The new king dissuaded them. Said they, "We shall be punished." "Oh! no," replied the ancient man who rules Abrakrampa councils. "We promised 600 men and sent 150. Nothing was done to us, and nothing will be done to you." Of every king in the country such reports have been sent in. The other day, at Mansu, a

petty chief was overheard, haranguing a party of carriers, telling them what fools they were to work, having now got plenty of money. Him the police seized, but the men promptly deserted the same night. There are two causes for this sudden and desperate break down. In the first place, men possess more money than ever was in Fantee land before, and want to peddle with it, or to gamble it away at leisure. I cannot tell whether gambling existed on the coast before, nor what game they play at. But it is carried to an astonishing point now. Men gamble for silver in hatfuls, and quarrel and shriek over their losses as only Fantees can shriek. In the second place, they are afraid to cross the Prah. So urgent is our strait that the 1st W.I. Regiment has been transformed into carriers this morning; the 2nd W.I. began its duties yesterday, and one man died right off under the unaccustomed labour. The Naval Brigade has received orders that it must provide for its own transport, making the fourth body of fighting men thus encumbered with double duty. Will England continue to protect such subjects as these of the Gold Coast? I greatly mistake my countrymen or there will be an unanimous outcry in favour of abandoning the Fantees to their manifest destiny. They are fit for nothing but slavery. We could wish them more merciful masters than the Ashantee, but when it comes to a choice between their slavery under the king, and our slavery under them, there is not room for hesitation. This delay may cost hundreds of lives. It is certain that the Ashantees

are not prepared for us. The Adansi Hills, that great strategic position, are still unoccupied. Twenty-four hours from this time of writing, King Koffee Kalcalli will know what is coming, and, had we been decently served, he might have learned within six hours that the Adansi Hills were seized, and his last hope gone, without a fight. This chance is now emperilled. And for every life spent in the struggle, and they may be many, the Fantees are directly responsible. It is not only an act of king or chiefs. Each individual of the cowards is responsible, and the whole nation must answer for it.

Sir Garnet has now seen for himself in the case of Assin what manner of people he is fighting for. Are these worthy of England's best blood and her hard-earned money? Shall we again fight such a war for such a people? Fight we must again in time, shorter or longer, if we continue to hold this coast. If, as seemed probable, the Ashantee king had collected all his power and been overthrown, perhaps his kingdom would have broken up, and all danger have disappeared. But it is likely now that he will be taken by surprise, will offer some feeble resistance, and retire to the bush behind Coomassie, whither we cannot attempt to follow. At our retirement he will be almost as strong as ever, and savage for vengeance. Shall we again attempt to make an expedition against him? All England would cry out to forbid it. For brave and honest subjects, she would be ever ready to fight; but cowardly, cheating, ungrateful slaves have a claim on no

master. We have hitherto treated these Fantee allies as men; there is but one opinion now in the expedition that policy has failed. Let us try Provost Marshals and a short shrift with king and chief to save our own lives and our own honour. When that is done leave the unworthy people to their fate; ample store of arms we can give them easily; but the courage to use them they will never possess.

So unutterably dull is this camp! As in the time before our world was created, "the evening and the morning are the day." Our items of news mostly relate to this friend's seizure and that's convalescence. Somewhat livelier is the evening. As the sun declines below the tree-tops, the Naval Brigade prepares for work. Presently the sailors may be seen and heard defiling across the bridge with measured tramp. On the other side they fall upon the forest with axe and cutlass, clearing brushwood and piling it to burn. It is intended to build a *tête-du-pont* at the other end of the bridge, and to arm it with that Gatling which has survived the perils of the road. The Naval Brigade is independent of carriers. Its own detachment to Kroomen from the ships amply suffices for all needs. The engineers arrived on the 8th. Dr. Turton is appointed Sanitary Officer of the expedition. Lord Gifford is reported to have now advanced twenty miles, nearly to the foot of the Adansi Hills.

I have just been over the bridge to observe our sailors at work on the other side. Every morning, about 6.30, they go across with axe and cutlass, to clear the bush for our

tête-du-pont. To see them working is a sight indeed! On the ground, in the trees, clustering amongst the parasites, flat on their faces blowing at a fire, dragging logs, grubbing stumps, hacking, hewing, slashing, slicing, at it they go with a quaint earnestness on brow, and bearded lips ever ready to grin. They drag the cut bushes into a monstrous pile beneath some tree all hung with creepers as with a mantle. Then they fire the green stuff, which won't burn, and scurry away for yet more fuel. So from day to day the great heap dries, under sun above and fire below, until, one night, it fairly catches and leaps up, a fiery pillar, a fountain of tossed flame, above the forest. Then they stand and cheer, and heap the furnace higher. The cut lianas roar as they flare upwards, enveloping the tortured tree in bands of fire, and burst above its crown with scarlet jets and eddies. Then how the sailors cheer! Quick as the flame mounted, it exhausts itself, and dies in a torrent of burning sparks. Such illuminations have we every night, thanks to our Naval Brigade, which works at eve and morn with indefatigable spirit. They have cleared a space near a hundred yards wide around the rampart destined to defend the bridge. This work goes on slowly, under the exertions of native industry. Very picturesque looks our camp from the further side, now that the clearing of the bush allows one to get a view of it. The banks of the Prah are very high, as I have told, and they grow daily higher above the lessening stream. At morning time a dense mist rises and curls along the water, but it does not reach

the upper ground. That gives off its own vapours, but they are slight, nothing like the heavy, noxious fogs of Mansu. These speedily rise and hang about the tree-tops, whilst between mist and mist the sun strikes in a horizontal ray, gilding the tents and sandy slope, burnishing the brown-thatched huts, and drawing a halo round the common objects of a camp,—the kegs and boxes, guns in row, shivering groups of natives, officers striding past, and blue-clad levy at drill. Over all this part of the encampment is a canopy of leaves, for trees have not been felled except for road-making. No hills or incidents of nature make our background. Trees, trees, trees, of diverse colour and foliage, but always vividly green, shut out the prospect.

8th. Twenty-nine engineers arrived this morning, to the great delight of Major Home. His road-making has been stopped, like other needful enterprises, by the failure of the Transport; 320 men, who had been employed in this work from the very commencement, were handed over to the Control Department this morning, and the engineer officers only hope they may see a few of them again. Major Russell, finding no enemy, pushed on five miles further yesterday; Lord Gifford and his scouts beating in front without more opposition. It is said, though I cannot find any authority for the rumour, that the seven men encountered on the evening of the 5th, one of whom was killed, were only the escort waiting for the Ashantee envoys. It seems curious, however, that they should have stopped so far in the rear, if

ignorant that we occupied the ford. More probably they were armed villagers, looking after their crops. We are now beyond the country where every man bolts, leaving wife and children, at sight of an armed stranger. Fighting may be expected whenever our scouts meet roving parties of the inhabitants. But the opinion grows stronger every day that the Ashantees are too thoroughly surprised to offer serious resistance. Some sanguine persons persist in regarding all the signs vouchsafed to us as elaborate blinds. They believe that King Koffee knows all our proceedings and intentions, and that the envoys were sent down merely to deceive Sir Garnet, and tempt him to some rash move which would be destruction; that the mis-direction of the letter to Colonel Harley made part of the same scheme; and that the despair which apparently led the younger envoy to suicide was feigned to conceal an act of devotion to the fetish. These things are possible, but very improbable, as it seems to me. It is the interest of every chief who bore a part in the late calamities to deceive the king. An invariable rule of the Ashantees is to behead the man who bears bad tidings, and much more the general who has been defeated. Amanquattiah might well trust that accident would stop our progress, or we should give up the enterprise in despair; he knows the Fantee character, and has the English yet to study. Nor does it appear to me by any means necessary that the Ashantee general himself should be acquainted with our intentions. He saw nothing of white troops during

the retreat, and he finished the invasion with something very like a victory. He probably feels quite equal to meeting any black force with the scratch levies that can be raised immediately around Coomassie. In fact, it is not easy to perceive how the news of our design should reach him on such authority as would command credence of a story so improbable. The Elminas, whatever their secret wish, are too thoroughly convinced of our power to attempt active disloyalty. We know what disregard the Ashantees show for scouting. How should Amanquattiah learn the truth? Those who could tell him now are all closed up in Chamah, in Ahwoonah, and elsewhere. On these grounds I think it almost certain that the king is really ignorant of our projected invasion, and has taken no steps to meet it. Doubly irritating, therefore, is that cowardly desertion of the Fantees which delays us at this critical moment.

Several speeches and anecdotes are related of the envoys. The night of their arrival they were placed under guard of the Bonny men, the cannibals. So unequivocal were the demonstrations of these custodians, that the envoys, seriously alarmed, sent to Sir Garnet for a change. This was promptly accorded, but the Bonny men showed a reluctance to depart which almost resembled insubordination. They wanted to eat the gentlemen. At the funeral of that envoy who shot himself, the survivor gravely expressed much satisfaction that such decent honours should have been paid the deceased. On passing through the serried ranks of the Naval Brigade, which

had marched out two miles, as I have told, to impress his mind, the envoy showed much emotion. He said, "There is nothing but peace towards the white man in my king's heart. He has never had palaver with the English. He will be very grieved. Let the chief wait a week, and the captives in Coomassie shall be restored. But if you go on, there will be bloodshed." To this no answer was returned, of course, and the ambassador went his way gravely troubled.

Sir Garnet is writing despatches for the mail, as is every one in camp, and I am just informed that the tone of his report is most cheerful. The General has a right to express satisfaction. That we are not further advanced, that the treachery of those we came to fight for should have delayed his plans at the moment of utmost importance, that one white regiment should have been forced to re-embark, and others should be unable to proceed, are miserable facts to chronicle. But, on the other side, to the unmixed credit of all officers engaged, it must be counted that we are where we are, that the protectorate is cleared, the Ashantees quailing in their homes, and the dreaded hills that defend them are about to be occupied, we hope, without striking a blow. Above all things be it noted that the unhealthy zone, apparently, is left behind. We have sickness in this camp, but it is light in character, and almost wholly confined to those who have to work in the sun. Even Lieutenant Mann, who suffered so grievously, has turned the corner, we hope, under this healthy climate, in which men sleep under three

blankets, and find them not too many. These things are ground for thankfulness, and on them doubtless Sir Garnet dwells in his despatch.

Captain Nicol has just come down from the front. He reports that Lord Gifford has scouted eight miles beyond Essiaman, where Major Russell's regiment is at present stationed, without finding an enemy. The Adansi Hills are but ten miles further.

Our officers here are too many to enumerate, and they still arrive daily. But I must not forget to mention the name of Major Bravo, of whom so many untrue and unworthy statements have been made. I have seen the letters in which Major Bravo has twice solicited relief from his duties as Commandant of the Castle, and permission to take the field with his regiment; and I have seen the courteous replies in which Sir Garnet regretted to refuse these petitions. On the eve of action, however, he has mercifully been set free, and is hastening up. Captain Glover's great projects are now believed to be at an end. Poor man, he trusted Fantees, and he reaps the fruit. His 24,000 warriors have dwindled to 1900, of whom 700 are Houssas. With this woeful force he is marching towards us. Captain Butler, warned by the example and by experience, will not undertake to estimate the Akims he will bring, whether by hundreds or thousands; he will bring all he can, says prudent Captain Butler. We are now fairly across the Prah, though Major Russell's regiment is only sent over to cut the

broad road. A week to-day is the 15th, and then Ho ! for Coomassie !

Jan. 10*th.* One comfort we have always enjoyed in Prahsu up to this—the Harmattan wind. It is useless for residents in Cape Coast to set us an example of protecting themselves against it, of barring doors and windows with a shudder. The Harmattan may be as noxious as you please, but we perspiring wretches insist upon enjoying it. This wind comes from the Sahara, as is alleged. It is hot, but not hotter than our common breezes. The peculiarity thereof lies in a dry and thirsty appetite, which licks up each drop of moisture. When the Harmattan blows we perspire no more, neither day nor night. The skin becomes comfortable—at least that of new-comers. 'Blessings on the desert wind,' we griffins cry, but the old residents of the coast miss their eternal vapour bath, and moan in predicting the sorrows to befall.

Last night I accepted a cheerful invitation from Major Home, R.E., to go with him into the bush and observe some experiments in gun-cotton. The progress of our road is delayed by no obstacle so much as by the fallen trees which perpetually interrupt the old bush path. It had been energetically represented to Major Home, that a way of re-removing them quicker than axe-work, would be found in the use of gun-cotton, and he, though confident of his own theory, had determined to give these objectors a demonstration of their mistake. Assured that the tree to be experimented on lay close to the bridge head, I set out in slippers, in company

with Colonel Wood, V.C., Dr. Fox, the operator himself, and two other officers, with an engineer labourer. We crossed the bridge, and gaily entered the opposite forest. Over hill and dell, through swamp and brake and valley water-worn, we followed our guide—Dr. Fox and I in slippers, whilst monstrous guinea worms environed us. Darker it grew and darker under shadow of the trees. We attempted to return, but Major Home was resolute, and we could not desert him. If need of arms had arisen, there was not even a pocket knife amongst us, as appeared when two miles had been tramped over. But *noblesse oblige*, and we followed on, I thinking to feel the guinea-worms in every part of my body. At length the chosen tree was reached, chosen by whom, or why, I know not. Holes were bored therein and plugged with gun-cotton, to which Home set fire in majestic calm. We, meanwhile, stood at a distance, up to mid leg in water. Of course the proposed results did not happen, but Major Home was not a bit elated by the proof of his discretion. Again and again, in different methods, the cotton was applied, with the effect of splitting and splintering, but not cutting the log. It was now very nearly dark, and fast indeed did we hasten home. Dr. Fox and I, marching in slippers, fell behind, and presently we heard a most uncomfortable snorting and grunting in the bush near by. "What's that?" I asked of Dr. Fox, somewhat suddenly;—for, when you read this, dear comrade of old travel, will you not remember sounds much the same, when you and I camped those

pouring nights on the bleak gold mountains of Chontales, hard by Libertad? I had not forgotten the puma's unmusical note, when on the foray, nor was a bit surprised to receive Dr. Fox's answer—"Leopards." In another moment, the reply came in grunts and purring, from our left hand. I take it those leopards were never more than fifty yards off, one on each side, and they kept company until we reached burning bush at the bridge head. I was rather pleased to feel the familiar timbers beneath my feet.

To-day, twelve men of the Houssa Artillery, with one 7 lb. gun, proceeded to the front under charge of Lieutenant Knox, R.A. On the same day there was great joy amongst the doctors to receive not less than 20 boxes of "medical comforts." On opening, 12 of them were found to contain —— "no matter what! It was not what they sought." Fancy the rapidity with which the tale travelled. At Prahsu there are no less than twenty-one doctors, and the most Scotch amongst us enjoyed this joke. But the poor sick men probably failed to see it.

11*th*. The deadlock still continues. The Rifles remain immovable at Barraco and Yancoomassie Assin; the 42nd at Mansu and Yancoomassie Fantee; the 23rd on board ship. Nor are there satisfactory signs for the future. The whole transport service has fallen into disorder under the sudden and incredible strain of wholesale desertion. Although the officers of Control have worked with most creditable energy, there is sure to be a breakdown in some quarter when difficulties reach a

certain point. To-day we have news of a great disappointment. With much exertion 600 carriers were raised here and sent down the road to Yancoomassie Assin to bring up the provisions supposed to be delayed there. Very angry indeed was the general to receive 600 boxes of ammunition, of which we have no urgent need, whilst Mansu is choked with provisions for want of which the advance has ceased. When stores will have accumulated to the extent of justifying a move, no one is bold enough to predict. But the utter idleness to which we are condemned is producing bad results. Sickness increases daily, though it has not yet reached a serious pitch. Some short time since there was a struggle amongst the doctors for every patient, but all can find employment now. How many medicos we have up here I am not prepared to estimate off-hand. More than sixty are attached to the expedition, which is a handsome allowance indeed. Staff Surgeon-Major Turton is the sanitary officer of the camp, and most energetic is he in removing the filth, the dead oxen, and the heap of putrid matter which formerly abounded, when all hands were busy with preparing for those white troops which have not yet arrived. Captain Butler has sent from his Akim camp, begging the services of a "fighting doctor," one who can make himself useful in the field as well as the ambulance. Surgeon R. W. Lowe has been selected for this service, which all envy. I regret to tell that his science is already needed. Three officers are reported to be on their way hither invalided. Captains Paget and Brabazon and Lieutenant

Macgregor are the unfortunates. All are understood to be suffering from fever, which we begin to look upon as a trifling matter, so dreadful have been the cases of dysentery, from which disease, in its worst form, Capt. Huyshe is suffering. The three officers joined Captain Butler only a fortnight since, having made a boast of marching up at the rate of four miles an hour. This is the result of a feat more creditable to their heels than their heads. We hear little of serious sickness amongst the troops echeloned along the road. Many fell out on the march, suffering severely, but they appear to have speedily recovered. Nevertheless, idleness will try their strength. So serious is the crisis that bets begin to be offered about our getting to Coomassie at all. If we should fail, the people of England will remember to whose cowardice and treachery the failure is due.

There is absolutely no news, and our only excitement lies in visiting the alligator, and receiving calls from the elephant. Our alligator dwells in a tub in Colonel Wood's lines. He is a fat little beast about two feet six long, captured by the gallant cannibals when peacefully observing their sanitary condition from the top of a bank. Though in early youth, he has evidently seen much of the world, and has deeply drunk of the waters of philosophy. The Prah must hold much of that science in solution, for to watch that youthful saurian is to be convinced that he has reached the highest grade. No neophyte could keep his eyes so very open, with never a wink, whilst dangers and wonders innumerable encompass him.

Do what you will, the sublimity of his stoicism, the mute contempt he feels for all humanity, are not to be disturbed. Take him by the tail, he never glances round, nor heeds. Push a straw into his eye, he gently, mildly, closes the yellow orb, nor turns aside his devoted head; with patience inexhaustible he lends himself to scientific investigation, nor expresses one spark of interest whether it be his snout or tail or tub-like belly that is prodded and discussed. But there is a depth of philosophy which approaches the stupid, and we have lately lost interest in the alligator. The elephant reduced him to nothingness yesterday. This welcome animal made his first appearance at midnight, in front of the West Indian lines. Heedless of the stupefied sentry, he descended to the river bed, and leisurely began his ablutions. The sentry did not know whether to fire or not, so called upon the experienced sergeant of the guard to explain his duty. The experience of the sergeant was not equal to the decision, and he, in his turn, appealed to his seniors in service. They, waking up, held a council of war, and it was speedily resolved that a personal inspection would alone enable them to fix a course. An adjournment was therefore made to the bank, and all the West Indians, roused by the controversy, crowded to the spot. There, dim in the mist, stood a monstrous creature, splashing like fifty fountains. Hot grew the argument, so hot indeed that in the midst of it came a louder splash, a rumbling, a crash of branches—and the *gravamen* vanished! Next day, our previously peaceful camp

divided in angry contentions, which are not yet stilled. There are those who stake their credit on the elephant pure, real, simple; those who ridicule the beast as a mere hippopotamus; those who swear it a rhinoceros; those who scorn and sneer at elephant, rhinoceros, and hippopotamus alike, and would have it that the entire regiment was misled by its West Indian imagination. The wise say nothing, and so secure the good will of all parties.

12*th*. The Ashantees, when at this camp, burnt and hacked the roots of many trees which did not actually fall. Their object was to hollow out the trunk and make canoes. We have found such in all stages of hasty manufacture. But the trees thus abandoned are a cause of considerable anxiety to those who dwell beneath their shadow. My *confrères* in the press-quarter don't at all appreciate the shelter of a cotton tree, superb in its dimensions, which overhangs their settlement. Its mighty trunk, eaten half through with fire, supports a crown of foliage broad as an English copse, at the height of a hundred and fifty feet. In the same manner was threatened the Naval Brigade; and last night, under the alarm of a rising wind, they all changed quarters by torch-light. This morning such a tree has actually fallen, with a crash so loud as to rouse the whole camp; and we have now reached dimensions which make the perambulation quite a march. It would take the Engineers whole days of labour to remove these dangers; and in this country the matter of time is one of life and death. So we put up with

rotten trees as a "chance of war," and make jokes about them. Peril from fire also have we had to-day. Some of our multitudinous cooks lighted up a hut immediately behind the tent which I share with Dr. Turton. It blazed like fire-works igniting, and for a few moments there was serious danger to the camp. But from every quarter came doctors running, and in such legions did they muster, that hut and fire were down in twenty minutes, extinguished by sheer force of medical muscle. No one else assisted save a few Bonnys or Kossus. Alone the doctors saved the camp, and I sing their praises. Can we not afford to smile when scorners mutter anent the Capitol and its preservation? But there is some undeniable truth in that other remark of ill-disguised envy—that to say the doctors did it is to say that the whole camp assisted. We are all medicals at Prahsu. On meeting a stranger you address him as doctor, just as at Dunquah you addressed every native as king. We have few royal persons here. As a rule, on entering a strange camp, you ask, "Are there many kings about here?" the same as in England you ask after partridges. Doctors Reide and Stafford, I regret to say, are suffering badly from fever; Captain Russell is laid up with boils in his feet, Captain Huyshe and Lieutenant Mann are severely ill of dysentery, and there is some sickness in the Naval Brigade. From the road we hear bad reports, especially of the Rifles. My poor friend Filliter, of Dunquah, is desperately ill at Barraco.

Lieutenant Wauchope, 42nd, coming in from the front,

reports Ashantees in force at the Adansi Hills, but I have reason to think the news is not accurate. Twenty-eight men of the 2nd W.I. went across this morning to join Major Russell. Dining with Colonel Wood, he told me a ghastly tale of Kossu savagery. After the unfortunate affair of November 27th, an Ashantee boy fell into the Kossu hands. Him they tied to a tree and cut to pieces, a Houssa looking on. When the mutilated body was discovered, this Houssa told what he had seen; asked why he did not interfere, replied coolly, "I supposed it was done by order!" It needs cases like this to remind those who are not in daily intercourse with the Kossus that these amusing and manly fellows are, after all, mere savages, and savages renowned and dreaded for their ferocity. Those who tortured the Ashantee boy—who was probably no Ashantee at all—could not be identified.

13*th*. Under the seat in Colonel Wood's mess-tent, where I dined last night in great cheerfulness and contentment, a snake has been this morning captured. The chances are it assisted without invitation at our pleasant dinner. The natives declare it is of a very poisonous species, but all savages in every country declare all snakes to be poisonous.

Late last evening a letter from the king of Ashantee, carried by Mr. Kühne, superintendent of mission factories, captured at Crepi, June 12th, 1869. He himself was detained by Major Russell, at Essiaman, for the night. All Sir

Garnet's terms of peace are accepted, saving only the march to Coomassie. What those terms are is a secret which a general might wisely guard, as long as negotiations are still in progress.

Mr. Kühne himself came over this morning about eight o'clock, in a hammock sent for his use. He lay therein, looking deathly. A number of officers, standing on the lofty bank above the bridge, took off their hats and welcomed the prisoner. He smiled feebly, and indeed the poor man appears to be unable to enjoy even his deliverance. All the morning he sat with the General, but I greatly doubt whether the information he had to give proved very valuable.

200 men of the 2nd West India regiment crossed the river to-day under Colonel Webber, Captains Haynes and Grant, and Lieutenant de Barr. It is announced that the second act of the campaign will open on the 23rd, when Sir Garnet will be in a position to invade Ashantee. Colonel Wood's regiment, with Rait's Houssa artillery, crosses on 15th. Captain Brabazon, feeling better as he travelled down, has turned his hammock round to rejoin Captain Butler, who lies, with his Akim army—fourteen in number, they say!—about thirty-five miles to the east. Captain Glover is reported at Akropong. Lieutenant Bell, 2nd W.I., is "down" to-day—fever. More doctors are arriving, and it seems likely they will all find employment. There are not less than sixty attached to the expedition. About one-eighth of these are volunteers.

The remainder were "invited" to offer themselves—declined—and were ordered out. This night the sailors had a great bonfire and concert in front of their lines, at which the General and his staff, with Mr. Kühne, assisted. The Ashantee boys, whom the latter has brought with him, conceived the notion that this festivity had special reference to them, reference of the most uncomfortable sort, for they expected to be then and there cooked and eaten.

14*th*. This morning, by permission, I had a short conversation with the released prisoner, but it would have been cruelty to strain his politeness. In the evening I met him at dinner in the General's quarters, and had more free conversation. Mr. Kühne knows nothing of the king's intention towards the other prisoners, Mr. Ramseyer, who who has a wife and two children and a French trader, Bonnat. He said they had been fairly treated according to Ashantee views, but his own allowance, for himself and two servants, was but 4½ dollars, £1 0*s*. 3*d*. each forty days. This barely sufficed for food. His clothes on coming in were scarcely fit to be so called, but a subscription amongst the staff has now made him decent. For eighteen months no word of European news had reached the captives; up to that date they were allowed to receive the 'Daily Telegraph.' They made furniture and built houses for the king, who has material reasons for regretting the necessity of giving them up. No objection was made to their preaching—all members of the Basle Mission preach, even

though not ordained—and they received respectful attention from the audiences, but Mr. Kühne has no hope that their exertions produced any serious effect. He thinks the king would have interfered at once had there been prospect of conversions. The people listened in mere astonishment that white should be able to speak their language. Some said "the words were good," but went no further. The missionaries and their French comrade were much harassed by sneaking delations of the Fantee slaves who abound in Coomassie. These, to curry favour with the king by professions of care for his safety, told him all sorts of foolish lies; as that the white men were building his new palace with wet bricks, so that it might fall and crush him. Koffee, however, has too much judgment to credit their false reports. He appears to be a king of sense. No affair of state was ever discussed in presence of the prisoners, nor of any other person not a member of the council. For this reason Mr. Kühne has small information to give. He knows that Amanquattiah's army is disbanded, but cannot express any opinion as to the king's chance of raising another in time. There are no defenders on the road, however, except the guard of thirty men who keep our scouts in check. Perhaps by this time Lord Gifford has found out their numbers, and has driven them in. The road between the hills and Coomassie is described as very good, but fenced by bush of the densest character. There is no clear ground as far as the great market town of Serim, about ten days' journey, or 200 miles at least, beyond Coo-

massie.* Amanquattiah's army is beyond doubt disbanded. It marched into the capital without any order or ceremonial, but this is usual. The King gave a "dash" of 100 sheep and forty-four *pereguin*, about three ounces each, and expresesd approbation of the campaign. The army marched from Ashantee with 40,000 warriors, according to the reports, of whom confessedly not more than 20,000 returned. The people of Coomassie are quite as much afraid of coast disease as are white men, and with as good reason apparently. Mr. Kühne counted 279 boxes containing the bones of chiefs, brought home for burial, as the custom is. Besides these, at least a hundred skulls, preserved in the same way, lie about the bush around Abrakrampa. In regard to the military preparations made to receive us, if any, Mr. Kühne is under engagement with the General to keep silence. But it is easy to perceive that he expects no organised resistance. I take it that he thinks some hot-headed chiefs may dash upon us, but that the king has neither power nor energy to do anything serious. He received the letter of Sir Garnet with stoicism, nor did the caboceers present indulge in such demonstrations as might have been expected. The date of the letter, January 6th, produced a chilling sensation, for it showed a curious coincidence. When Sai Tooti, the founder of the Ashantee empire, fixed upon Coomassie as his capital, he rested under a

* On this point I may possibly have misunderstood Mr. Kühne. It is asserted that open country will be found one day's journey from Coomassie that is, ten days from Cape Coast.

tree whilst his temporary palace was a-building; hence the name, which signifies "under a tree." The trunk thus honoured has become almost sacred in Ashantee eyes, and a strong superstition had grown up concerning it. On January 6th, having long been decayed, it fell, and dire prognostications were whispered. No one dares to touch it, and Mr. Kühne assures us we shall find the immemorial tree lying across the street when we march in. Such an omen might alarm stouter hearts than have the Ashantees. So the king heard Sir Garnet's communication with decorum, and especially that part where it was told him how one envoy had shot himself. "Enough!" he said, when the reader was translating Sir Garnet's explanation. "What is this the Amirado writes about? The man is dead. Enough!" It appears that this envoy shot himself, not for fear of the Gatling gun, but because he had used incautious words which would, he knew, cost him his head on returning. By the report of our informant King Koffee is about thirty-five years old, and has the true kingly air, though much seamed with small-pox. "You could not mistake him," says Mr. Kühne, "though he were surrounded with chiefs. He has the eye of a king." But the savage luxury of his life, and the great hareem he keeps up, have sapped such energy as his appearance leads one to believe he must have had. His mother, to whom the throne belongs of right, and who chose this favourite son to fill her place, has great influence over him. She is a prudent though a warlike

woman, and her power is likely to be used in favour of concession. In fact, Mr. Kühne quite confirms the account I wrote two months ago. The Ashantee empire is rapidly declining. Even the numbers of the population cannot increase under the terrible drain of sacrifice and war. The caboceers still profess to put into the field the same number of retainers as did their forefathers, fifty years since, but in reality they cannot muster much above the half. I find that Colonel Festing's prisoner, whose report I sent home in a former despatch, spoke truth about that king who answered the summons of war from Inkoranza, on the borders of the Sahara. Such a distant vassal did indeed march with the invaders, but his 10,000 men, of paper, were represented by only 1100 of flesh and blood. The magnificence described by Bowditch, if it ever existed, has dwindled with the decaying power of the state. The king has still his ornaments and regalia, which would make a pretty loot, but he is hard pushed for money sometimes, and his "dashes," or presents, become yearly meaner. The sacred treasure in Bantama, where the tombs of the kings lie, is supposed to be still intact, but Mr. Kühne is not inclined to think it such a large sum as might be expected. At the outbreak of every war, the king is allowed to draw upon this fund, but the amount so abstracted he is bound to restore. The question is whether this law has been strictly observed. In the market-place of Coomassie, stands a monstrous basin, of brass, wherein a pebble is solemnly deposited whenever the

Ashantees go to fight. This basin is now so full that the stone commemorating their invasion of Fantee land had to be placed with the greatest care to avoid overthrowing the pile. Mr. Kühne often thought, when passing this trophy, that a day might come when an English general would toss a rock upon the heap, and explode it like a shell. I think Sir Garnet was struck with the idea. But the argument remains that if the Ashantees have made so many wars, and for each of them have drawn upon the sacred fund, without returning a strict account, the increase provided by successive deaths in the royal family may well have failed to keep the balance. But positive information on this subject is not forthcoming. Mr. Kühne only professes to be guided by the distrust implanted in his mind by five years' experience of the national character. As he says, "They are all politicians, and all liars!"

The constitution of the country appears to have undergone a change since Bowditch's day, if his information on the subject may be relied on. The missionaries were jealously excluded from any knowledge of the inner court life, but they saw enough to satisfy themselves that no great family is now protected from the king's absolute will. The four hereditary councillors mentioned in Bowditch have disappeared, with their privileges and immunities. The king is now a despot, restrained only by his natural fear of a turbulent and warlike people. He raises and degrades from the highest to the lowest rank, at pleasure. Amanquattiah himself is a mere

creature of the king, whose ancestry no one knows, or, at least, troubles about. Koffee Kalcalli, in fact, has a habit of appointing children to vacant "stools," and the proportion of caboceers under manhood is extraordinarily large. Perhaps he thus escapes some portion of the customary "dashes." Princes of the blood have some privileges of a rather indefinite nature, but they alone. The power of the king is uncontrolled, save by fear of the populace, and a salutary recollection of strong measures which his predecessors have suffered. To conclude the subject of Mr. Kühne's interesting revelations, I am happy to add that he appears to be under little apprehenson for the fate of his fellow-captives. The king sent him away with a robe of the royal pattern, to insure respect on the road. He also gave freedom to his hammock-bearers, Fantee slaves, who, however, did not cease to grumble and revile until he got his Ashantee "boys" to give one of them a sound flogging; by-the-bye, whatever strong language I have used, or others have used, about the Fantees, is outdone, I am happy to say, by the unbiassed report of this simple and devoted man, who had never seen any of the nation until he became a captive. He himself was released without any conditions.

To-morrow, according to the original intention, we should have started for Coomassie. But in so designing, the general counted without his host, or rather, he counted upon his host, of Fantees. Their desertion left us for awhile without any decided date for the advance, but it is now fixed for the 23rd.

Wood's regiment of native levies, Capt. Rait's battery of Houssa guns, and a reinforcement of engineers, leave to-morrow, but the first white troops only march in on the 18th. Lord Gifford, with his sixty scouts, is well in advance, and has touched the enemy about ten miles south of the famed Adansi Hills. In what force he is posted we have not yet any information, but he appears to be too strong to heed any demonstration of scouts. Mr. Kühne, indeed, reports that the post in front of the hill does not exceed thirty men, but Lord Gifford seems to think it considerably larger, though not sufficiently so to offer serious resistance. The 42nd Regiment has gallantly volunteered to carry its own baggage, and the offer is accepted. I cannot but fear, to judge by experience, that this economy of bearers may be bought too dear. Violent exertion, in this climate, rarely fails to bring on fever, as is too well shown by the case of officers arriving here. Few escape an indisposition more or less severe after their eight days' march. It commonly lasts about forty-eight hours. The labour and exposure of the 42nd men will be vastly more severe, for in daylight only can they carry a fifty pound load. The 23rd, it appears, landed, and reached Akroful, the second halt, before they received the order to re-embark. A curious incident is reported from thence. A private of the regiment was fired at in the bush. Who is to be accused of this deed? It is barely possible that two or three Ashantees may have been left behind in Amanquattiah's retreat, and are yet prowling about the bush. But the popular

voice denounces a Fantee. It will be observed that in too many cases I am obliged to preface my story with the hateful words "it is said." The fact is that no facilities at all are offered to correspondents in this war. We may pick up our information as we can, for the answer of the staff to any inquirer is invariably, "I don't know anything!" Of personal courtesy there is abundance in most cases. We are allowed two servants and two bearers on the march, who draw rations, but with this assistance we could easily dispense. A little less politeness, and a little more information, is an exchange which correspondents would welcome. At the same time, a civilian might think it within the resources of military art to give both. As a matter of system, however, Sir Garnet disapproves of correspondents. In this war he has an excellent opportunity of showing his abstract objection to them, for there never could be a case in which gossip would do so little harm.

15*th*. Late last night the news came that Lord Gifford had surprised the force of Ashantee scouts and driven them off in the greatest disorder. Ten guns were captured, and the entire body would have been made prisoners if a Fantee with Lord Gifford had not made a noise. Captains Glover and Butler are supposed to have crossed to-day with their respective forces. The Rifles should reach this camp on the 19th and 20th; the 42nd, with 100 men of the 23rd, on the 21st and 22nd. I have made up my mind to go across and see for myself the truth of these rumours that constantly come down to us. Too

dreadful is the prospect of waiting another eight days here. Most sociable and pleasant is every doctor in camp, but the monotony of living as in the days before the Flood, becomes unendurable. We are sick of the muddy river racing by us, sick of the mists at dawn, the noonday heat, and creeping, smoky shadows of the eve. Cannibal plays delight us no more; neither their war-rushes along the road at night, when fifty maniacs dash full speed, swords drawn, foaming at mouth, before our tents;—nor the war song of the Kossus, who scream and drum an awful challenge, to the chorus of "Dademà no go!" with a fiend-like shake of laughter in the pauses. Sick we are of our own bank, its rectangular roads, big huts, sylvan squares, and tents. Sick of the other bank, mud fort, Ashantee huts, and all. Sick, beyond every other thing, of the everlasting trees that crowd and crush us in, mercilessly green, stifling. I, at least, can get away, and I go to-morrow. Wood's regiment and Rait's artillery duly started this morning, each man provided with four days' rations. To-day, it is said, Gifford will occupy the Adansi Hills if possible, and to-morrow Major Russell reinforces his scanty troop. My comrade of the tent, Dr. Turton, has deserted me, accompanying Colonel Wood. To-morrow night I also will be acquainted with the wonders of Ashantee ground.

CHAPTER IX.

WITH THE ADVANCE GUARD.

A Camp in the Forest—Distinctions between a Bivouac and a Picnic—Occupation of Adansi Hill—Quisa abandoned—Fetishes—Attobiassi—Essiaman—Effumusu halt—Akrofoomuh—A Refugee—Orders to Advance—The King's Road—Troubles about Food—Colonel McLeod to the Front—Moynsey Camp—Colonel Wood there—Climb the Adansi Hill—Reflections upon the Climate—Neither Man nor Beast will live—Our Adansi Camp—Reports and Rumours—Quisa—The Joss-house—Handsome Ornamentation—Flowers and Foliage in the Tropics—A Theory about the Brazilian Bee—The Remaining Prisoners pass through—News from Coomassie—Amanquattiah degraded—King of Mampon new Generalissimo—Humanity of King Koffee—Royal Women of Ashantee—The Great Basin in the Market-place a Measure of Tribute—Former Oppressions of the Ashantees—The Attack of King Gaman—Butler's Advance causing Alarm—War Chiefs Refuse to Fight Him—The General passes the Hill, with the Rifles Adventure of Captain Gordon—An Impaled Slave—Stupid Discourtesy at the Post-office, Cape Coast—The 42nd crosses—The Commander malingering—Farewell to the Adansi Camp.

Paratomee Camp, January 20th.

I BELIEVE there are still some ardent souls at home who look upon this war as a picnic excursion, only tempered in its pleasure by occasional attacks of illness. I wish those

gentlemen could pass an hour with us in this camp. Their sense of the picturesque would be immensely gratified, it is true. I am travelling, at this moment, with 114 men of the 2nd West India Regiment, whose uniform, though wofully stained and tattered, has more taste than is usual in our military dress. We are encamped in the midst of a forest, on a gentle slope. Though the undergrowth has been cleared away, the trees remain, and between their mighty buttresses we have built sheds and bath-rooms. Like broken cordage of a wreck, the "vines" hang down, crooked and bare; of every size they are, from twisted cables, thick as your body, to the long, straight tendrils which descend, fine as a whip, from giddy heights above. No tree puts out a branch until it overtops the thick-pressed canopy of saplings, and spreads its arms freely in the sunshine. But every trunk in sight is clothed with woven parasites, broad-leaved and lustrous, which spread thicker and thicker as they ascend, until, from a hundred and fifty feet aloft, they throw down suckers in search of food. Under shade of the wood we find the air cool enough. From time to time a shudder passes through the deep stillness, waving the slender ropes, and dropping on our heads a shower of leaves. The clearing round Colonel Webber's tent is occupied with fires and littered baggage and hammocks and shanties. Clothes are hanging to dry between the trees. Down to the left, before a monstrous cotton-tree lying prostrate, stand the tents of our West Indians. They are resting now after fatigue duty, mending clothes, burnishing

arms, smoking, and chatting. Very effective are their red tarbooshes against the green background. These elements of picnic pleasure have we, but where, where is the pigeon-pie, the *foie gras*, the iced champagne, the claret cup? Where, if it comes to that, is the table-cloth, the plates and cutlery, the ingenious hampers, the—the ladies? The hollow echo of our forest has no answer. But these are luxuries, not to be expected or desired in campaigning. Let us look for mere necessaries and be content. Down at the store-shed yonder, Lieutenant de Barr will readily tell you what food he has;—observe that an officer in the front must take any service that is needed; to-day a paymaster, to-morrow in charge of transport, and then again distributor of commissariat. Mr. de Barr tells me he has to-day thirteen boxes of rice and two of preserved meat. No salt, no sugar, no potatoes, and no vegetables. There are two bottles of brandy in camp, no wine and no beer. No tea, nor coffee, nor cocoa. Is not this picnicing, with a vengeance? Last night, about midnight, we had a desperate storm, lasting two or three hours, so heavy that no tents nor canopy of leaves would keep it out. Hence the display of kits and blankets about the camp. We are doing duty to-day in our wet clothes and boots; pray Heaven there be not a reckoning in dysentery to come. These are the luxuries of our excursion. Once, at Akrofoomuh, we have reached a camp and found absolutely nothing to eat in it. So the Fantees treat their defenders; and I hope England will not be persuaded, by any foolish promises, to forget their

conduct. Nothing is to be gained by holding this coast, unless we re-people it. The trade is so ridiculously small that two London firms can absorb it nearly all. When the Ashantee empire is destroyed, as it probably will be, that trade must greatly diminish; for the Ashantees at least kept the peace, guarded the roads to the interior, and were themselves our best customers. In fact, as is admitted in Cape Coast, the only trade worth mention was the Ashantee trade. What of that will remain, when anarchy rules throughout the wide tract of land now at peace under their subjection? The interior commerce will soon diverge to the Dahomey route, by which already the greater portion of it passes. There is a future easy to divine before Whydah, Lagos, and the rivers. Cape Coast Castle has been steadily falling to ruin ever since the abolition of the slave-trade, whilst these others yearly progress.

But I am wandering far from Paratomee camp. Thus far have we advanced into the bowels of the Ashantee land, without seeing more of the enemy than an occasional skull by the roadside, and a solitary slave escaped. Lord Gifford and his scouts have had all the fighting up to this, nor can one see any probability of livelier work to come. I am writing two miles and a half from the foot of the Adansi hills, which were occupied by Major Russell's force, without opposition, on the 16th. What accounts we had received of the difficulty to be expected in climbing these hills, of their steepness and the density of their vegetation,

are quite confirmed. Very soon I shall be able to report from observation what sort of barrier is this which the stupid Ashantees have given up without a blow; let it suffice that an officer who has made the ascent could only compare it to Vesuvius. Those who have looked down that crater will require no further witness to the difficulties overcome. Major Home and his party of engineers are now cutting a zigzag path up the precipice. Major Russell, after building three redoubts upon the crest, pushed on with his main body towards Quisa, where, in the meantime, a dialogue of the Homeric fashion had been exchanged between Lord Gifford's scouts and the "Captain's guard" stationed here to protect traders. The Ashantees met our scouts fearlessly, lifting the butt-end of their guns, and asked what they wanted. "To fight!" replied Lord Gifford. "Impossible!" exclaimed the enemy, "we have no palaver with white men!" "Are you going to fight or not?" asked Lord Gifford. "My king has sent me here for that purpose. What has your king sent you for?" "Not to fight white men. We must go and ask him." "Be quick then," our scout master answered, "for I shall attack you in the morning." So this amusing incident ended. The Ashantees tum-tummed all night, and frightened sleep if nothing else, but in the morning Quisa knew them no more, and, for the first time, an invading foot trod the soil of Ashantee. For it is to be remembered that although the Prah river is the acknowledged boundary of Fantee land, it is not the frontier

of Ashantee. As the Suevi in Cæsar's day, so these warlike savages of Africa keep a *cordon* of waste ground, a no-man's land, around their territory. On this side it is the district between the Prah and the Adansi range, whence the Assins were driven into our Protectorate long ago. This tract, between thirty and thirty-five miles broad, has never been colonised by the conquerors, and through all that width there are but three hamlets, of which the largest has not six houses. That the Ashantees look upon the Adansi or Moynsey hills as their boundary has just been proved by the fetish charms found on the crest. When Major Russell came out on the top of the ridge, he found two white kids empaled alive, a cow's head, and a monkey's; on a stick beside them was a *saphi*, or Arabic charm, invoking the direst curses on the invaders if they should dare to pass the spot. It is quite possible that the Quisa guard relied implicitly upon these goats and heads to repel the foe, but if they had meant fighting, I think they would have gathered to support the charm.

Having seen the mail go, I left Prahsu at 8.40 A.M., on the 16th, and, walking easily in the dense shade, reached Attobiassi at 10.45. This distance is reckoned at 8 miles in the Itinerary, which is our best guide for the route. I put it at $5\frac{1}{2}$. There is no small difference in the character of the country on this side. Hills are more frequent and steeper, dells more abrupt. All along, the road slopes to the eastward, and deep valleys abound. There is a long swamp about three miles from the river, wherein flourish palm oil trees, and yuccas,

with a beautiful luxuriance. At Attobiassi, one sees the first Ashantee hut, and marks the improvement of the architecture. The walls are solidly built of wattle, not brick; the flooring is raised two feet, carefully smoothed, stuccoed, and painted red. The outer wall, also painted up to a certain height, is stuccoed in deep panels, circles, and other devices. There is a centre room open all its width, which occupies nearly all the front; in the cases I have seen, however, it is barely eight feet by six. On either side are tiny dens, cupboards, almost, dimly lighted by loopholes, in which, I suppose, the women curl themselves to sleep. Accommodation, therefore, is most desperate scanty; but these buildings we have seen are mere farm huts, inhabited by the lower class. Their solidity of construction, and their ornament, better entitle them to be called houses than the extensive ruins which Fantee ambition has erected at Cape Coast. This village and others also is encompassed by fields of cane quite ten feet high, and so thick one cannot see six inches through the brake. I cannot learn that any use is made of them, unless they be employed in wattling the houses. I left Attobiassi, where is a post of Fantee police, at 11.50 A.M., and marched into Essiaman at 1.30 P.M. Here is another hamlet of six houses, perhaps, similar in construction to those already seen. We are particularly struck by the excellent thatching, which is much thicker and much better made than that we are used to. The little houses are separated by a tiny interval, not more than four feet certainly in width, and it is evident that

if Ashantee towns are similarly built, they offer extraordinary facilities for street fighting. However, our artillery and fire balls would soon make the narrow lanes untenable. Around the hamlet has been erected a solid stockade of heavy logs, well-planted in the earth, and eight feet high; a stockade to keep out all the negroes of Africa. Here I found Colonel Webber with nearly two hundred men of the 2nd West India Regiment. Colonel Wood's Regiment had left for Akrofoomuh an hour before. Under the shade of india-rubber trees which abound in the forest, though the stupid natives have never yet revealed the fact to European traders, nor have themselves discovered any use for the sap—we lit big bonfires as night came on, and gathered round for chat. At 6.35 A.M. next day, *en route* for Akrofoomuh. The road is better beyond Essiaman, though much broken by hills. Abandoned bivouacs and camps are frequent, and we several times passed human bones by the wayside. After two halts, reached Effumusu river, 9.30 A.M. This resting-place is set down in the Itinerary at nine and half miles; we calculated it at eight only. If distances go on thus decreasing, we shall find ourselves at Coomassie without knowing it. The Effumusu halt is in a charming spot. A pretty river here forms a rapid, pouring under and between great boulders of granite. All round, dwarf palms, and ferns, and graceful nameless brush, dip their soft foliage in the torrent. They sparkle like gem-work under the spray, and shake feathery heads the whole day through to quick pulsation of the water. Great

bamboos form an arcade some yards above, and throw such cool, pellucid shadows as would tempt an anchorite to bathe. Whilst bathing, one of our party found a Snider cartridge, loaded. In a few moments not less than twenty-two lay on the bank. Some of our valuable levies in Wood's or Russell's Regiments had thus lightened their equipment. Starting again at 2 P.M., we reached Akrofoomuh, 3.50. Here the stockade is of wattle only, with a breastwork, the entrance guarded by a stout *frise*. Inside is an excellent shed, forming quadrangle, in which the white troops will sleep. We found here the first refugee, a good-looking woman of Ahwoonah, who informs us that King Koffee has sent a very handsome "dash" of gold to his rival of Agaman, begging assistance in his trouble. King Gaman or Agaman keeps the dash, but emphatically declines to help. She tells us also that there is great scarcity of food in Ashantee, owing to the absence of the men during the spring; that most of the women have already left Coomassie, and that even males are scarce. Coomassie in the best seasons is a most expensive place, as M. Kühne reports, and in time of scarcity the poorer folk desert it. But distress is now general throughout the country, and there appears to be little probability that Amanquattiah's disbanded force will be able, even if willing, to reassemble.

At Akrofoomuh we had expected to halt forty-eight hours, and in that belief we began to set up tables and chairs built of palm leaves, tied together with vines. I took advantage of

the opportunity to send my carriers back to Prahsu for baggage left behind. In this camp there was not anything whatever to eat, until we had sent a fatigue party to Effumusu for rations. At 2 P.M. on the 18th, arrived a special runner from Head-quarters, directing Colonel Webber to push on immediately and occupy the "king's road." This path, of which we had heard much, turns the Adansi hills, leaving the direct route somewhere by Foomanah, and coming out, as the Guide tells us, about Dompoassi. By it we should have marched if hills had been occupied. There is much mystery about the king's road. It is supposed to be only used by the Ashantee monarch when sending out his troops for an invasion of Fantee land. Thus far he advances from Coomassie, makes fetish, cheers on his army, and returns to the three thousand odd bosoms of his household in peace. Our officers believe they have identified the mysterious path in a well-worn track that leads off to the left about half way between the Paratomee river and Moinsey, but the identification is not so well determined as could be wished. Anyway, Colonel Webber was ordered on to defend this path, in case it should enter the Ashantee head to make a diversion in our rear. At 4.30 P.M. the march began, over ground that became more broken and hilly. Shortly after starting, we met a messenger from Colonel Wood, informing us that the spot chosen for the night's camp was unsuitable, and recommending a further stretch of one and a half mile to the bank of the Paratomee river. At 6.10 P.M., just at dark, we reached this place, and

found there Colonel Wood himself, with all his Regiment. Next morning, 19th, they started for Moinsey.

The same day Captain Grant explored the path which we suppose to be the King's for some distance. Not far up he found a cross-road, with the remains of a camp lately occupied, several fishing lines, etc. This seems to oppose the common idea, and makes us doubtful whether we hold the true path. Captain Nicol, of the Hants militia, whom we had relieved at Akrofoomuh, came in to beg food for Major Russell. We had none to give, having just sent off a fatigue party of fifty men to get supplies for ourselves. Major Russell has occupied Quisa, and it is ascertained that Foomanah, where stands the palace of the King of Adansi, is abandoned. Our fatigue party came back without stores, for there are none at Akrofoomuh, and Colonel Webber found it needful to lend Major Russell 18 boxes of rice from the stores of his regiment. With these Captain Nicol returned in great joy. The 2nd W.I. Regiment has now 7 officers and 211 men north of the Prah. 8 privates serve amongst Lord Gifford's scouts. Lieutenant Jones and 28 men are with Russell, 115 we have here, and 60, under Captain Haynes, garrison Akrofoomuh. We have but one man sick. 11 officers and 284 men are scattered up and down the coast. Another section, under Lieutenant Pattison, has been despatched to the king's road. In the night very heavy rain fell, such as our little *tentes d'abri* are not calculated to resist, and most extremely uncomfortable we were. Colonel Web-

ber and I gave up the struggle at last, and turned out in mackintosh coats and long boots. It was as much as human lungs could do to keep our pipes alight.

Colonel McLeod, of the 42nd, is put in command of the advanced guard, consisting of Wood's, Russell's, and Webber's 2nd W.I. Regiment. Lieutenant Wauchope, 42nd, is appointed Brigade Major. Lieutenant Clowes and Dr. Suttle passed through on their way to the front, and Lieutenant Aldridge, 95th, visited us again with his returning carriers. He reports 1000 Ashantees hanging round the outposts yesterday, who scattered on a demonstration from Lord Gifford. There are 5000 loads of food at Essiaman whilst we are almost starving; 25 cases of sausages went through our camp to-day for Russell's regiment. It was seriously debated by Colonel Webber whether he would not be justified in stopping them. We have nothing but salt pork, not even biscuit.

21*st*. This morning Captain Bromhead, of Russell's regiment, brought us the intelligence that the new Brigadier, Colonel McLeod, might be expected immediately. This announcement produced a panic, every officer bolting away to dress. Our picnic costume is unusually easy. In due time he arrived, as did Lieutenant Knox, R.A., and long trains of engineer and artillery stores. The General is expected to pass through to-morrow, four days earlier than had been announced. Captain Huyshe is dead, delirious. A medical court has invalided Lieutenant Bell. Lieutenant

Mann, R.E., is convalescent. In the afternoon I left Paratomee, in company with Captain Playre, who is appointed to the Transport service. In an hour and a half's walk we passed many bivouacs, both of Ashantees and of our own men. Streams are much more rapid in this hilly region, and they bubble through the fringing ferns as clear and merry as in some Scotch glen; but the forest springs not less dense. We have given up all hope of escaping the eternal shadow of the trees.

At 4 P.M. reached Moynsey camp, at foot of the Adansi hills. I wished to climb these famous heights at once, but one view of the ascending path cooled all my ardour. Colonel Wood's regiment were encamped on the bank of a stream, immediately below the stockade erected to defend this foot of the hill. Here, in tents and huts of plantain-leaves, they were awaiting the General's arrival. Ten minutes' walk through a narrow bush path took one to the village of Moynsey, deserted now, and half-levelled. The houses were small, but some of them had a great deal of ornament. The chief's house stood conspicuous, as usual, with arabesques of stucco on its front, and the customary tree devoted to the fetish. There was some fresh blood about it when first entered, whether human or other is not known. Lord Gifford, if truth be told, has had some curious experiences of fetish worship. It is said that the great prophet of this country showed himself at top of the Adansi hill when Gifford was laboriously climbing up, and solemnly devoted

us all to perdition. The prophet's name is Suleiman, evidence of his Arabic origin or lore. Captain Rait is unwell, but not seriously, we hope. He would indeed be a loss to the expedition.

On top of the Adansi hill, January 22.

Most decidedly and emphatically this land was not designed for human occupation. A black skin and a negro's constitution may make existence tolerable, but safe it cannot be for black or white. If your servants get caught in a shower, they incontinently have fever. Feed them on decent and wholesome food, the change brings on dysentery. They have guinea-worm on an average twice a year each. Medicine of one sort or another is a necessity of life. Foul diseases, for which they have no remedy, consume a quarter of the population; out of 350 carriers, I have seen thirty dismissed as useless at one time on the daily parade, and be sure no man is excused unless the necessity be indisputable. I have just had painful proof of my theory. Of seven hammock-men sent to Prahsu, three have fallen sick on the road. Nor is there any suspicion of "malingering." In the first place, they have received no wages since the 1st inst., and, in the second, their absence imposes treble duty on those remaining, who have to carry my baggage in two journeys instead of one. Perhaps my readers may think that even that irresponsible person, a special correspondent, rather abuses his privilege in occupying eight bearers, but it must be borne in mind that three of these are engaged in carrying food for themselves.

and their companions. A man whose movements are so erratic as a Special's should be, dare not travel without some small store of provisions, and these, with tent, bed, portmanteau, and cooking utensils will not pack in less than five loads of fifty pounds each. But enough of personal matters; I only wish to show by an example how unsuited is this clime to all human life. We have just had a terrible reminder of the uncertainty in which we whites exist in the death of Captain Huyshe. He succumbed to dysentery on the evening of the 18th. By last mail I gave a cheering account of improved health amongst us, but expressed a fear that idleness might work a change. We hear of much sickness. The Naval Brigade is reported to have fifty men unfit for duty. The Colonel and Major of the Rifles are both unwell; Major Maclean is invalided to Cape Coast; the Hon. Mr. Wood, A.D.C., is suffering; and considerable illness prevails amongst both regiments on the road. I am reminded that of twenty-eight officers who came out by the 'Ambriz,' one, Lieutenant Wilmot, has fallen in action, Captain Huyshe and Lieutenants Townsend and Charteris are dead, Colonel McNeil and Captain Godwin are wounded and sent home, Captains Gordon and MacAlmont are invalided. Eight officers lost to service out of twenty-eight is a terrible percentage, for, in any other country, Colonel McNiel and Captain Godwin could have recovered of their wounds in time to return to duty. Of the officers and non-commissioned officers belonging to the 2nd W.I. regiment,

which landed in June last, but one officer and two sergeants remain.

Adansi.

But I have a more pleasing prospect to describe, a prospect indeed as sunny and beautiful as ever called up a traveller's enthusiasm. After a "pumping" climb I mastered the Adansi hill this morning, and found myself once more a guest in the advanced post of Colonel Wood's regiment, of which the main body is encamped down below, beside the village of Moinsey. The height of this hill has not yet been properly measured, and opinions vary between 1000 and 1500 feet. Whichever be right, it is about the steepest climb, for such a short distance, that any of us have experienced, although Major Home and his engineers have laboriously cut a zigzag all up the hillside. But even here the everlasting forest prevails. When Lieutenants Richmond and Woodgate went up with their company to build a redoubt, the thickness of the bush forbade any view whatever. By persistent hacking at the undergrowth, by felling the smaller trees, and keeping up perpetual fires, they have cleared a considerable space upon the crest, and exposed a charming view. On either side rise loftier hills, clothed in green from base to summit. Very far off, in the misty distance beyond Coomassie, is a faint shadow of mountains. The level between, through which lies our road, is beheld through breaks of foliage exactly like that affectioned by the earliest of Italian painters. Giorgone might have studied his tree effects, looking like bunches of

green fingers, from this spot. The plain lies misty and vague; its tones of delicate verdure fading in the distance to a golden haze. High above the forest level uprise the pale green crowns of cotton trees, disdainful of lower growth. Creepers drop like a brown waterfall down the trees yet standing. Great ruffs of fern encircle their branches, or hang their leaves, like stag-horns, from the topmost bough. A few trees bear a crown of blossom, scarlet or pink, but not to match, in mass or beauty, the brilliant garden of Fantee land. Animal life, for all we see of it, might not exist at all in this country. We hear birds and beasts sometimes, sometimes we see parrots fly overhead, at a distance to skim the tallest boughs, but few of us have beheld a creature that runs or flies, except the insects. I meditate a short digression on the creeping things of Africa, in some pause of the campaign. It is sufficient now to say that no country in the world can compare with this for variety and numbers of its insects.

The chances of a fight are again looking up. The Ashantees have been seen in force beyond Foomanah, about three and a half miles away. That large village, however, is abandoned, as is Quisa, a mile and a half from this. Both of these are handsome villages, larger than any in Fantee land, much better built, and more civilised in every way. At Quisa are the advanced posts at present, under Major Russell. The General has again changed his plans, in consequence, I believe, of increasing sickness down the road, and the unexpected improvement in the transport service, which, as all admit,

is due to the great activity of Colonel Colley. The judgment and organising power of this gentleman are extraordinary. Sir Garnet left Prahsu with the Naval Brigade on the 19th, instead of the 23rd, as intended. We are hourly expecting him on the hill. More fetishes and charms have been discovered on the route by which we advance; one, a miserable slave, with a wooden musket nailed between his hands, shockingly mutilated. Colonel Macleod, of the 42nd, is appointed brigadier, and commands the advanced troops, Russell's, Wood's, and Colonel Webber's 2nd West India Regiment. We hear that a halt of seven days at least will be made at Quisa, with the view of establishing a great depôt there. Of Glover's and Butler's movements we know nothing at the front, but I am happy to say that by latest advices Captain Brabazon had so recovered from his fever as to return to duty.

23*rd*. Last evening I walked over to Quisa, where Major Russell and his regiment are stationed. There is a small post on the road down held by Captain Methuen and Lieutenant Douglas with 50 Bonny cannibals. This side the hill is much shorter and easier of ascent than the other. Quisa enjoys a delightful climate. A winding mountain stream follows the road on one's left hand, and the noise of its frequent cascades seems to cool the air. Quisa had probably not less than 1500 inhabitants. Some of the houses in it are curious, and one, which we call the joss house, is really handsome. Its walls are covered with ornament in bold relief,

and the nooks and niches—all most scrupulously clean and in perfect repair—give it an appearance quite picturesque. On the right, on entering, is the fetish niche, where was found much curious rubbish, such as egg shells strung together, and bones and sticks. On the left is an open chamber, reached by two steps, just large enough for a bed. One side of the quadrangle is occupied by a larger alcove, divided in the midst by two arabesque columns which might have come from the Moorish Court at Sydenham. There are no closed chambers. The Ashantees are evidently a people who live in the open air. When first entered there was a good deal of blood about the place, believed to be that of animals. Some loot the Houssas obtained, of which the most valuable consisted of ivory. Lord Gifford, who is temporarily stationed here with his scouts, secured a number of handsome "pegs," or tusks of the she elephant. I am most happy to tell that Lord Gifford is in perfect health, nor has he suffered a day's sickness since he began the dangerous and fatiguing duty so excellently performed. All Russell's regiment was preparing for an advance to Foomanah to-day, which has duly taken place. The indefatigable Major Home, R.E., not to be repressed, has already carried his road beyond our most advanced posts. Captain Buller has just ridden through our camp, and announced that he has been three and a half miles beyond Foomanah without seeing sign of an enemy. It is believed, however, that the inhabitants of these villages have not fled far. Our

scouts and foraging parties continually come across their tracks. By the bye, Dr. Turton informs me, after careful measurement, that this hill rises 1540 feet above the sea, of which about 600 is that desperately deep ascent which lands one at the top without a puff left in one's body. The General and his staff paid us a visit last evening, and partook of tea before returning to Moinsey. The Naval Brigade, reduced to two hundred men, and under a new commander, Captain Grubbe, of the 'Tamar,' marched through early this morning, Captain Blake being invalided. The first detachment of the Rifles reached Moinsey to-day, and will probably cross the hill to-morrow. They have lost 77 men, but no deaths. Hon. Mr. Wood, A.D.C., almost abandons the hope of reaching Coomassie. Two hundred men of the 23rd, besides the hundred selected, were ordered yesterday to Prahsu to fill up vacancies. The king having returned no answer to Sir Garnet's letter, fighting is expected, and great precautions will be used in the advance. All the white troops rendezvous at Quisa, and will keep together. Russell's and Wood's native regiments form the advance guard, with perhaps Colonel Webber's 2nd West India. These march along the king's road, to ensure our left flank; and the company of Wood's regiment remaining at Moinsey will, I hear, cut a road for themselves between our path and the king's road. If there be any Ashantees hanging about this hill, they will probably be discovered by one or other force. The moon has begun to be of service in night march-

ing. Rait's Houssa Artillery passed us to-day, and the officers stopped, as usual, for tea. We keep a sort of caravanserai on this hill. Quisa is only a mile on, and Foomanah a mile and a half. In such cool and pleasant quarters I propose to remain until the advance takes place, for to get ill in this crisis would be heart-breaking.

In my absence the General and all his staff had paid our mountain bivouac a visit. Lieutenant Richmond tells me our landscape was looking its best in their honour, and its best is very beautiful. There is a tenderness of colour in these Tropic woods, a gentle variety of tones, which we never find in Europe when trees have their full leaf. The reason lies in this: all our verdure breaks out at once, or nearly so. The difference in time of foliage between the earliest tree and the latest is but a few days. In these countries it is not so. The common notion makes all tropical trees evergreen. I remember once hearing an ingenious theory, founded on deduction, touching the instinct of bees. Said my friend, circumstantially, "When the Portuguese carried bees to Brazil, the insects did their work in storing honey, with the accustomed industry. For several generations they made magnificent combs and filled them bravely. But in process of time the little workmen discovered that flowers bloomed all the year round, and that it was unnecessary to store up food for the winter. Henceforth they took to living from hand to mouth. Is not this a curious example of instinct?" Curious it would

be if true. My friend extracted the instance from his own moral consciousness. As a matter of fact, flowers do not bloom all the year round anywhere, and there are no bees more industrious than those of the Tropics. Trees are not evergreen in hot climates. One drops its leaves at the time when a neighbour, perhaps, is budding, and another shows its utmost spread of foliage. Hence arises the delicacy of colour which one admires so much in looking over a forest in the Tropics. But in this country, the sight is not to be beheld except by expenditure of much toil. Here is especially the case to say, "One can't see the wood for the trees."

Last night, in the darkest and stillest hour, Mr. Richmond and I were both awakened by a sound as of some great gun fired. Turning out, we found the sentry fast asleep. The noise may have been caused by a falling tree, or it may have been a device of the fetish priest, Suleiman. He still hangs about the hill, as is believed, fearing to return to Coomassie, after the failure of his incantations. Lieutenant Richmond is feverish, and this misfortune somewhat reconciles him to the disastrous result of his late "toss" with his comrade Woodgate. Only one of the pair can be allowed to move from hence, and Colonel Wood kindly allowed them to decide the question for themselves. By the ordeal of the shilling, Lieutenant Woodgate accompanies his regiment, and Lieutenant Richmond stays behind to nurse his fever.

24th. We have just had a sensation, in the arrival of the

captive missionaries. They came through this camp—M. Ramseyer, with his wife and two babies, and M. Bonnat. Lieutenant Grant, 6th regiment, had them in charge, and very amusing were his efforts to carry out an imperative order forbidding them to hold intercourse with any one. The poor people were sadly in want of water and of that cheering beverage which we dispense every fifteen minutes to passing strangers. Partaking of this refreshment they got rather dispersed, and Mr. Grant forthwith took upon him the appearance of a sheep dog, whose charge is straying amidst foreign flocks; but in very truth these gentlemen whom we call missionaries—M. Ramseyer is not ordained, and M. Bonnat is merely a trader—have nothing important to tell. They doubtless possess the material for an excellent and exhaustive work upon the laws, police, manners, customs, and government of the Ashantee kingdom. But of those matters immediately interesting, which come within the view of a newspaper, they are quite ignorant. A single fact of importance M. Bonnat brought down, one, however, which will soon have lost its value. The King observed to him privately that if the white men were in the market-place he would not fight them. If the white men got so far, Koffee Kalcalli would be prudent to leave them alone. On the other hand, he tells us that the chiefs went out on Monday last, the 19th, to collect their men for a fight. We learn also for a certain fact that Amanquattiah was not favourably received by the King. The forty-four *periguin* of

gold, the sheep and salt given by him to the returning army, were not marks of approbation. It appears an imperative order was sent down that no man should retire further after crossing the Prah, but await events, guarding the north bank. This order was simply ignored, and the King imposed a heavy fine upon his disobedient chieftains. Amanquattiah himself suffered the loss of his "stool," or rank, and the King of Mampon is appointed Generalissimo in his stead. The new commander is strongly opposed to further hostilities. He led the left wing of the invading army, and was present at the battle of Elmina. After receipt of Sir Garnet Wolseley's first letter, when he learned that the white soldiers were actually coming, Koffee Kalcalli doubled the fine upon those who had brought things to this pass. In his rescript to the General, he laid all the blame upon Amanquattiah and his advisers, declaring that the late commander should pay the whole indemnity. What the amount of this may be I cannot tell, but the released prisoners do not regard the King's promise as simply absurd. They declare that Amanquattiah is immensely rich, not in gold only, but in slaves. M. Bonnat has volunteered to accompany the expedition, and I believe his offer is accepted.

It appears to be quite certain that King Koffee is personally opposed to the massacres that constantly go on in his capital. Mr. Kühne told me that he caused his umbrella to be slanted at the moment of decapitation, and I learn from M. Ramseyer that he has summarily stopped several "customs"

since these troubles began. Only seven wretches lost their heads to commemorate the fate of the fetish tree, and a great Ashantee chief went to his grave with but four murdered attendants to wait on him. In both cases the king interfered. But he appears too fond of his hareem to undertake vigorous action. The royal women of Ashantee are reported by the missionaries to be really handsome, with features of a higher class than the negro. It may very well be that a large mixture of Arab blood is to be found amongst the chiefs.

There is always a scarcity of animal food in Coomassie, but even grain has reached famine prices now. Beef comes to about 9*d.* the ¾ lb.; mutton, 1*s.* The great basin in the market-place, of which Mr. Kühne told us,—wherein is placed a pebble when the king goes to war,—commemorates the time when these spirited Ashantees were slaves of Deukera. It is the tradition that the contents of this basin made the yearly tribute of gold dust paid to Deukera. That potentate, however, grew too insolent in his exactions. He demanded the first or chief wife from every head man in Ashantee, whereupon the people rose and crushed their master.

The missionaries heard in Coomassie that report about an attack from the north-west, conducted by King Gaman. They declare there is little powder in the capital, although the royal cellars have lately been filled to overflowing by a convoy of rum from Assinee. Captain Butler's advance with the Akims is causing some alarm. The province through which

goes his route sent pressing messages to the king for aid. He sent them a few kegs of powder, and ordered down three chiefs, one after another, to command the army. All refused, alleging that "The battle yonder was lost." They wanted to fight the white men if to fight at all.

The whole battalion of the Rifles, reduced to 580 rank and file, crossed the hill early this morning. They leave 77 sick men on the road, but none of them are in a state to cause anxiety. The General and his staff, with Commodore Hewitt, accompanied them, and we entertained all the party at tea. Sir Garnet was most courteous and communicative, as always. To meet the General, much more to dine with him, signifies much "copy" for the journalist. Colonel Wood's regiment passed through about nine A.M. The Rifles halt at Foomanah; Colonel Wood goes on to Dompoassi, a small town $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles beyond; our scouts having been yet further—as far as Kiangboassu. They report that the chief of the Adansi district lies on the left flank of our road with his force of regular soldiers and armed refugees from Quisa and Foomanah. He is supposed to have some hundreds of men.

Captain Gordon, 84th Regiment, better known under his old style of Lieutenant Gordon, 98th, has had a curious adventure. Whilst supporting the party of scouts, his Houssas came to a grove of plantains, where they begged permission to do a little foraging. Captain Gordon allowed a half-dozen to leave the ranks for this purpose, whilst the rest

stood under arms. He himself sat on a fallen log and began a letter for the mail. In a few moments there was a great clamour behind him, cheering and laughter and crackling of the underwood. It seems that the foragers had come across three armed Ashantees lying flat on their stomachs, and a Houssa stumbled right across them. The men had orders not to fire unless attacked, and the three spies escaped with their arms. They must have resisted a desperate temptation when Captain Gordon sat down with his back to them, not twenty yards away, with a clear space between. Strolling down the hill to Foomanah in the afternoon—it is but thirty-five minutes from this—I passed the place where the Ashantee fetishmen had set up their last cruel charm to keep us back. It was a slave impaled and mutilated, on each side of whom a live sheep had been buried. Lord Gifford threw the dreadful thing into a deep ravine that borders the road, having no tools for burying it. I suppose this is the spot where human victims were cast; for there are many skulls lying about it. In the midst of them is the heap of bones and shrivelled skin still transfixed on a bamboo stake. I found the officers at Foomanah greatly excited by a circular lately forwarded from the post-office at Cape Coast. This incredible document is headed "Unpaid Letter Circular," and intimates that such or such a sum is due for a letter insufficiently prepaid now lying at the post-office. "Upon receipt of amount it will be forwarded." Official stupidity could not go beyond this. The amount due varies in all cases I saw between one shilling and one

penny. How in the world can a man forward the sum to Cape Coast? There are not five hundred pennies in the country; the lowest unit of coinage is the threepenny bit. If one had the penny, how should it be sent? On a par with this absurd regulation is one, only abrogated by direct interposition of the General, which forbade the forwarding of any letters whatever without prepayment. This in a country where postage stamps are unknown!

25*th*. Half the battalion of the 42nd passed with Brigadier General Sir A. Alison at their head. We passed the day in burning bush, a labour the negroes seem to dislike almost as much as any other. Unless I went perpetually round and threw sticks at them, impossible to get the work done. 550 carriers went through the camp to-day, as many more are expected to-morrow, and 1000 next day. A bad report comes from the "Commander." He has grown tired of warfare upon our system, and longs for the helter-skelter, rough and tumble fashion of his country. I regret to say that his impatience has taken the form of "malingering." He has scratched a wound in his leg until it disables him, and persistently keeps the sore open. The commander is likely to be sent back in disgrace.

26*th*. Colonel Webber is still at Paratomee with his guard of the 2nd W.I.; but Lieutenant Pattison has explored the road we call the King's, pursuing it to the outlet, by Foomanah. There is still as much question as ever about this path. It has always been understood that nowhere could

the Adansi hill be seen from the king's road, for which reason it had such value to Ashantee eyes;—an ancient prophecy condemning to disaster any monarch who beholds the hill. But Lieutenant Pattison reports that he could several times observe its lofty crest, about a mile and a half to the right.* The second half of the 42nd crossed to-day, and I also broke up camp, leaving my shed of plaintain-leaves, my bath-room in the buttress of a cotton-tree, my sylvan table, and my rice-box seat, with unfeigned regret. Not for many a day shall I see an horizon, or a clear sky. Not for many a day shall I breathe such air. But duty calls, etc. I give Lieutenant Richmond a hearty handshake, and leave that genial host in his eyrie.

* Almost all that is known about this mysterious track is contained in the sphynx-like words of the 'Guide,' reprinted in the Appendix of this book.

CHAPTER X.

FIVE DAYS OF FIGHTING.

Attack on Adobiassi—Our Cannibals Suspected—March to Madoona with the Naval Brigade—Captain Grubbe—Captain Luxmore—Fetish Trees—Join Major Russell—Panic Among the Kroomen—Akhankuassi—An Ashantee Abandoned—The Townsmen ordered to Coomassie—The Royal Hareem sent to Djuabin—Work for the Engineers—An Ashantee Convoy Taken—Madoona Again—March to Borborassi—The Attack—Death of Captain Nicol—Attacked in our Turn—The Road Occupied by Ashantees—A Runner Killed—The Loot—Extraordinary Lamp taken by Lieutenant Deane, R.M.—Twelve Kegs of Powder Captured—The Prisoners—Their Fear of the Ashantees—Gallant Attack on our Retiring Column—Final Charge—Treachery of the King—The Enemies' Position—Disposition of our Troops—The Fight—Taking of Amoaful by the 42nd—Attack upon the Naval Brigade—The Kossu Advance—Ashantees Retire along our Flank—Fire on the Wounded—Assault on Quahman—Panic amongst the Carriers—A Wakeful Night for the Rifles—Amoaful—Stores Collected There—Excellent Service of Rait's Artillery—Great Slaughter—Death of Amanquattiah—Burning of Bequoi—The 23rd Ordered Up—Escapes of the General and Dr. Fegan, R.N.—Loss of Baggage—Predicament of the P. M. O.—Sights in the Town—Wholesale Slaughter by a Shell—Ad-

vance from Amoaful—News of Captain Butler—Colonel Webber left as Commandant—Skirmishing all along the March—Every Post in the Rear Attacked—Foomanah Hospital in Danger—Colonel Colley "Stops it"—Agimmanu—Confusion in Camp—A Dash for Coomassie Ordered—Baggage left Behind—A Flag of Truce—The King finds we Fight too Quick—The Dah River—Courage of three Ashantee Stragglers—Heavy Rain and Great Discomfort—The Battle of Adahsu—Capture of the Village—Baggage Ordered Across—A Narrow Shave—Death of Lieutenant Eyre—Note from Sir A. Alison—The Ashantees give Way—A Rush for the Capital—Coomassie Taken.

Foomanah, January 26th.

STROLLING down from our lofty bivouac, in company with the Rev. Mr. Brown, Chaplain to the Forces, I found the Naval Brigade encamped in this town. All the 42nd, and the ninety men belonging to the 23rd, are lying at Quisa. To-day Russell's men have had a brush with the enemy. Yesterday news came to the General that the chief of Adansi was still lying at Adobiassi, two or three miles to the left of the road. He sent word by messengers who accompanied the missionaries that the country was too small to support two chiefs: one or other must withdraw, and he gave twenty-four hours in which to consider the situation. At the end of that time, the Adansi chief having neglected the warning, Wood's and Russell's regiments were ordered to attack. The former took the path tending right, the latter left, from Dompoassi. Russell came first upon the enemy, finding them in occupation of the village. It had one broad street, with india-rubber trees planted in the middle, and several cross passages. From

cover of the trees and from the ends of the houses the Ashantees opened fire. Russell's men dashed across the clearing and into the village with the utmost pluck, the Opobos or Bonny cannibals leading. Two Ashantees were shot in the village and two taken; the rest fled with ridiculous precipitation, but opened a dropping fire from the bush on the other side; thither they were followed some distance by our men, who probably did execution amongst them, without any loss whatever. A third prisoner was taken lamed with slugs, which must have been fired by his own friends. A ghastly whisper circulates that the Opobos found an opportunity to get possession of this man, but we will hope the story is a camp "shave," such as abound in this expedition; certain it is, however, that the lame prisoner could not be found when search was made, and that the Opobo butcher absented himself six hours without leave; but no men in the world could look more innocent than did the sturdy, bullet-headed cannibals as they marched back.

Colonel M'Leod, 42nd Regiment, directed the affair as Brigadier of the advanced forces, and by his order the village was burnt, which act, we hear, has considerably annoyed the General. Major Home, with sixty of his engineers, supported the attack, but took no part in the action, though the men charged along the path full speed, at the word of command given by their medical adviser, Dr. Turton. Major Home, meeting them thus galloping through the wood, laughed heartily, and bade his doctor lead them on, which he did with redoubled

haste, but they arrived too late. A detachment of Rifles and another of the Naval Brigade were within reach in case of necessity. Major Russell regained the main road after this little brush, and marched to Kiangboassu, which I cannot accentuate, for no man knoweth the proper pronunciation—we generally call it "the place with the Chinese name." Colonel Wood pushed on to Detchiassu, a mile and a half further. The former is just a forest camp, on the slope of a hill between a little river and a deserted village which we call Madoona, but who gave it that name is a mystery.

27*th*. Round early by the sailors' packing, but started only at 6 A.M. In these narrow paths it is seldom one can pass with comfort along the line of march; and a correspondent, having no fixed place, must inflict his company on some one for all the journey. Our march this time was not long, only to Madoona just spoken of. In this neighbourhood there are signs of considerable population. The forest is cut with paths in all directions, and villages occur at short intervals. The Naval Brigade is now reduced to 200 men, twenty per cent. being sent back. Fortunately, they are but slight cases. Captain Luxmore is still with the party, but somewhat suffering from fever. At Madoona, as we hear, they are likely to remain some days; but in such a war all arrangements are liable to be altered at a moment's notice. I conceive that the General's idea is to let all his troops in turn have a chance of such excitement as may be going. That this system keeps them in health no one who has studied tropical fevers could

for an instant doubt. The story of this campaign is but another incident in proof. Keep men idle, and they fall sick; give them a daily interest, and you almost dispense with the doctor.

In Madoona we found ample shelter for all our number. Russell and Rait had to build shanties, but for us were comfortable huts all ready. After superintending the arrangements for my accommodation, in a large house, built of superior mud, I strolled back along the forest path to Kiangbiassu. Found my excellent friend Rait, with all his officers, engaged in felling timber. How those Houssas worked!—especially when they saw a chance of dropping the bush upon a white man's head. Saunders and Knox and Palmer, with Rait himself, stood in the midst of the abattis, and plied the axe and bill-hook manfully. So they amused themselves at Kiangbiassu, whilst we played ball with oranges up and down the streets of Madoona. I boarded with Captain Grubbe, at his hospitable table under the fetish tree, much larger here than is usual. The fetish tree is always to be observed in Ashantee villages;—I did not notice the same superstition in Fanteeland. There is the trunk common to all inhabitants, generally an india-rubber, and the private tree within the house walls. Both are considerably gashed about the root, and stand up on a heap of broken glass, old pots, rags, bones, and rubbish. The public fetish has always a fence round it, which keeps together this wretched pile. The tree of Madoona sheltered our mess-table—an array of rice

boxes—and the hammock in which Captain Luxmore, R.N. was endeavouring to shake off his fever.

28th. Late last night the order of march came to Major Russell at Kiangbiassu, and a requisition for 350 Kroomen to Captain Grubbe. Anxious to get to the very front, I determined to push on with Russell's regiment. We got away at the hour appointed, 7.30 A.M., and tramped an hour and a half, along a mere bush track, to Detchiassu. The road does not yet profess to have been touched thus far. Major Home is even now setting to work. At Detchiassu we overtook Colonel Wood, who had not yet started his regiment. Such a jam, such tumult, and disorder, instantaneously broke out when the troops joined, that Major Russell ordered a halt for breakfast. I never saw pell-mell confusion like that before, so sudden, and so hopelessly complete. It showed, what the sailors had already told me, how much more serious would be a panic amongst Kroomen than a panic of Fantees. The former, more independent, heed no order, and are too frightened for fear of their officers; the latter can nearly always be ruled by vigorous measures. At Paratomee camp, when the Naval Brigade lay there, a panic arose at night time amongst the Kroomen. It is said to have been caused by some men of the 2nd W.I., one of whom stumbled over a sleeping comrade. He, dreaming of Ashantees, sprang up with the word on his lips, and so roused the Kroomen. At one bound these gained their feet, and dashed through the camp to the Naval lines. They levelled nearly every tent, snapping the poles in

their headlong rush. Many fled straight into the forest, but the most part fell upon the tents of their protectors, and lay amongst the ruins, gibbering with fright, whilst the sailors savagely struggled to escape their canvas prison.

An hour and a half being given to clear the road, we resumed our march, along a track of clay, very wet, and puddled by the preceding troops. Passed a solitary engineer tramping stolidly through the mud; the man could not have plodded more calmly on an English highway. So to Ahkankuassi, reached about midday. This is the largest town we have yet reached, and may well have contained 3000 inhabitants. It does not cover so much ground as Foomanah, but the houses stand very close together, forming in fact a labryinth of courtyards and causeways. Streets are narrow, even that which runs through the midst. There are no walls nor fortifications round Akhankuassi; but I observe, for the first time, a town compact, presenting no loose and straggling *enceinte*. The houses themselves, all connected, and absolutely windowless to the outside, form an unbroken wall of defence, except where streets debouch. There are four of such, as usual; in the rectangles of the cross, walls, huts, courtyards, *alcoves à jour*, and the conveniences of Ashantee architecture, crowd the ground as closely as they can stand. Scarcely any furniture remains for looting, but a broken stool, in the possession of Dr. Weir, shows there were trophies worth gathering if that be a sample of their art.

The town is deserted, as always. A poor old wretch, dying

of consumption, abandoned by his friends, reports that all the people were ordered to Coomassie, whither they went five days ago. A few men lingered until the day before yesterday. It is evident that a general abandonment of the country is commanded. This poor creature at the point of death is the only Ashantee we have seen hitherto, excepting doubtful prisoners. Three more have been brought in to-day, from a village to left of the road. The people bolted at sight of our scouts, who found a fetish body left to defend the property abandoned. It was simply a man without his head. From the prisoners we hear that the king has sent all his hareem to Djuabin. Coomassie is said to be only sx hours from this.

The Engineers are very busy. Captain Buckle, R.E., and Lieutenant Cotter have ample work in bridging the Denkeran, a considerable stream near by. There is also a clearing to be made, and huts to be erected, for the white troops, not to name the fort, which is rapidly progressing. The clearing is on a cemetery of considerable size. I see no evidence of memorials to the dead, not even so much as in Fanteeland. It may be that only slaves are buried outside the town. In the afternoon a heavy thunder shower came on, wetting us all, and making a miserable camp. Lord Gifford tells me that the village he carried this morning was occupied by a convoy, evidently bringing commissariat supplies to an enemy hanging about here. Great quantities of *kenki*, corn, plantains, and fowls, were taken, all packed for travel. Captain Gordon

holds the head of the road a few hundred yards beyond this town, with his Houssas. Major Russell goes out to-morrow to attack Coraman, $3\frac{3}{4}$ miles away.

Sir Garnet is expected here to-morrow with the Rifles under Colonel Warren and Major Stevens; the 42nd, under Colonel M'Leod and Majors Macpherson and Scott; the Naval Brigade, under Captain Grubbe, with whom is Captain Luxmore, still an invalid.

Naval Camp, Madoona, January 29.

I did not expect ever to behold this place again. I thought it would dwell in memory as a fleeting vision of barbarism, 'scarce seen, but with some bitterness imbued." But in war, though the special correspondent may propose, it is the General who disposes his proceedings. Late last night, at Akankuassi, I heard that three separate movements were ordered for to-day, one to be executed by Colonel Wood's regiment, one by Major Russell's, and one by the Naval Brigade, supported by the 94 men who represent the 23rd Fusiliers. As the object and aim of all their proceedings were alike secret, there might well be indecision amongst free onlookers which body to follow. For Wood and Russell were undoubtedly advancing; but from Akankuassi to Kiangboassu is, beyond question, a retirement. On the other hand, as I patiently examined the case, it seemed improbable that the white soldiers would be sent into the bush, unless for real business. Troops commanded by English officers must advance; they don't retire without an object; which con-

sidering, I speedily decided to turn. How Sir Garnet gets his information—whether from prisoners, or direct from Coomassie—is a secret properly kept back. By some means, however, he learned that Essaman Quantah, the Von Moltke of Ashantee, who so bravely defended Dunquah Camp against Colonel Festing, had been sent from Coomassie direct with a large quantity of powder to a village called Borborassi, lying five to ten miles on the west of the main road. The path thither opens about 200 yards in the rear of Kiangboassu, from which camp, as I have told, Madoona is separated by a bush path of 150 yards. At Kiangboassu last night, lay the detachment of the 23rd, under Colonel Mostyn, Captain Hutton, Lieutenants Shepherd and Gilbert, with Adjutant Webbs and Dr. Fox; at Madoona, Captain Grubbe, R.N., with Lieutenants Noel, Evans, Pipon, and Mann, commanding 200 men. The Marines were in charge of Lieutenants Crosbie and Deane.

Starting at 5.30 A.M., I got back to Kiangboassu at 7.30, in time to get a cup of tea and a biscuit before the start at nine A.M. On the way I met the General, whose cheery greeting always sent a man on with lighter heart. All the staff rode with him on mules. The escort was twelve Fantee police under Captain Baker. The men of the expedition had breakfasted an hour before I arrived. Within two minutes of the appointed time we started, Captain Nicol, of the Hampshire Militia, leading with the scouts; then a company of Russell's regiment, who appeared to be under the orders of

A.D.C the Hon. A. Wood; then the Naval Brigade; then a rocket battery of Rait's Artillery, under Lieutenant Knox, R.A.; then the Marines. The detachment of the 23rd closed our march, preceding the hammocks for sick and wounded and the reserve ammunition; a rear-guard of three 23rd men and a corporal, subsequently increased to six men, closed the long line.

After leaving the main road we proceeded in single file through jungle, alternately dense and thin. I might well employ pages or columns in describing the accidents and incidents, the scenery, the graveyards, trees, and other curious sights of our long march; but I have much more to tell. Very wearisome it was, both to mind and body. Nowhere did the path exceed eighteen inches in width, but often was it blocked for yards together by fallen trunks, or roots, or uncomfortable swamps. Two streams occurred, rather deeper than one dared walk through, and broader than one could jump. The delay at each of these points severely tried the temper and endurance of those in the rear. It needed very many examples to persuade our soldiers of a fundamental law in marching: that is, the rate of three miles the hour in *front* means five miles the hour to a rear guard. During this march to Borborassi—I am not imputing blame to any one—there often were gaps of hundreds of yards between different bodies of troops,—gaps of fifty yards, sometimes between one file and another;—and we were all in single file, remember. How should we have borne attack

from such brave and experienced bush fighters as the Ashantees proved to be? But before the war was over, our soldiers and officers had learnt the practical lesson.

We went through Adobiassi, the village burnt by Major Russell, and at 10.45 A.M. a single rifle shot, fired by an officer who should have known how to command his instincts, told that the ball had begun;—unless, indeed, the gentleman in question had direct orders from the General to warn the enemy. Not for ten minutes after did the line open fire, but then it was a fusillade. I, for my own part, saw no enemy at this time, but seamen's eyes are quicker, and we had proof that the fire was returned, in seeing a brave fellow walk quietly back along the line stanching a wound in his chest. Then we came out into the clear, firing volleys into the bush as we doubled. There was a slight incline up to the village, and as we rushed up, a cry rose, "Hammock for a wounded officer!" But poor Captain Nicol needed no more help from man; he had fallen in the midst of the village in the act of restraining the fire, whether of his own men or of the flying Ashantees is uncertain. It is believed he was killed from the roof of a house. He made no motion after he fell prone. Dr. Turton was turning him over as I came up. Two slugs, either of them mortal, had pierced him in throat and heart. To me fell the melancholy duty of carrying back such papers and other articles as our poor comrade had about him.

Guards were instantly posted on all sides, for it speedily

became evident that the *rôles* had been exchanged. From an attacking force we were transformed into a force attacked. Mr. Knox fired rockets on both sides the village, our guards sent volleys into the bush, but still the Ashantee war song resounded at each pause of the din, and still the horns and bugles kept up a dismal accompaniment. In fact, it was proved that the path we had lately traversed was now in the enemy's hands. A runner sent out by Colonel M'Leod, under escort of two policemen, lost his head within two hundred yards, and the policemen ran back, one severely wounded, and one with three wounds, all slight. Meanwhile looting went on. Some gold was found—how much I have no idea at all, but of gear, in old English phrase, there was an immense quantity. Only a few objects really valuable and curious had been left behind, the most striking of which is in possession of Lieutenant Deane, R.M., a lamp of brass standing on a twisted pedestal with moulded figures of men, alligators, and ducks along the edge. I cannot think that a work of art so elaborate could have been executed in Africa, but it is not English certainly. Bracelets, gold charms, country cloths, which are valuable, carved furniture, fowls, sheep, and provisions, made our best trophies; but in a military sense the expedition was quite successful. Twelve, or as some have it, thirteen kegs of powder were captured, and two umbrellas, the standards of an Ashantee army. The distinguishing marks had been torn off them, so that one cannot tell with certainty to whom they belonged. It appears

that there were four chiefs in the place. Essaman Quantah, another great war chief from Coomassie, the king or chief of Adansi, and the proper head of the village. 750 men, probably picked warriors, had accompanied the old generalissimo, and with 150 belonging to the place made the fight.

A curious sight was that inside the village. It had been just a settlement in the bush, cleared barely twenty yards round. But even in so small a place one or two neat and pretty huts stood. In one of them, apparently the quarters of a great chief, we stowed our prisoners, all slaves, I should think. An extraordinary fact is it that all prisoners came in stark naked, whether men or women. I could not ascertain how they lost their clothes, whether voluntarily, as a custom of war, or whether stripped by our black soldiers. Several of these people were severely wounded with slugs, doubtless fired by their own friends or masters. These we wished to leave behind, but they begged in anguish to return with us. They said the Ashantees would certainly kill them. One stout woman marched all the way back, with wounds dripping from thighs and loins. I do not know what became of her.

We sat on stools and looted furniture at the entrance of the village, whilst our men lay in the grass, four or five yards out, with rifles loaded and cocked. Every now and again they fired a withering volley when the foe became too troublesome in the bush. Slugs were falling everywhere. Those who had anything to eat got it out and breakfasted, whilst our servants looted, and brought us their plunder,—some of

it, that is. My head boy found a little bag of gold dust, which I allowed him to keep. I heard of no more, except a battered *étui,* discovered by one of the Kroomen. Colonel Macleod, who is suffering from fever, looked so faint that I gave him my breakfast, feeling able to march yet some miles. At 12.45 we marched out, in the midst of an uncomfortable fire from all sides. The guides positively refused to lead us, even mixed in the ranks of the 23rd. It is a curious fact that the only man killed in our return was the guide most reluctant to advance. In the retirement the 23rd led, baggage followed in centre, and the Naval Brigade brought up the rear, with which I travelled. Not twenty yards out, these brave Ashantees recommenced their attack. Colonel Wood, as I understand, had been sent in advance to prepare an ambuscade for them, taking it for granted that they would bolt after our taking the village. Not a bit of it; they sounded their horns, they sang their savage song, and they came on us, now one or two, now a hundred, on either flank, and blazed away. I cannot but think they had prepared flanking paths, for the rear files saw them running through the bush with a speed that seems impossible unless the track was cut. At every tree they stopped to fire. Our soldiers were fairly amazed by such courage. It is astonishing there are no more casualties to record. But one sailor of the 'Active' severely wounded, and two slightly; two of Russell's regiment severely; Captain Nicol, a scout, and a runnner, dead, are all the result these poor savages could make for their

wasted lives. We went along, firing at haphazard into the bush until, about a mile from Borborassi, our men in the extreme rear passed up word the enemy was gathering strong. Again, and yet again, the report came up, "They're thick as peas, Sir! We can see them running from tree to tree!" "Face about!" cried Captain Grubbe, "and give them a volley." A moment afterwards it was done, and silence ensued. Lieutenant Pipon, who had charge of the men behind, tells us that the Ashantees were barely thirty yards away. At such close quarters a volley would be terrible; but it must be borne in mind that we had burnt and destroyed their reserve ammunition. From my experience of this fighting I should conclude that either a chief was killed, or else that the enemy had made one home charge to deliver their last shot. From this time we returned peaceably back to Kiangboassu and Madoona, a journey of seven miles at least. I, who had made eighteen miles on such sustenance as is contained in biscuits, almost regretted parting with my breakfast in favour of Colonel M'Leod. That night I slept again at Madoona, and it was not till morning that the over exertion of this march told upon me. The Naval Brigade and the 23rd advanced to Akankuassi next day, whilst Sir Garnet, with the 42nd, went on to Insarful. There is no longer any doubt that we shall have a battle to-morrow, the 31st.

Amoaful, February 1st.

We have had a battle at last, and one to remember. The tactics of our treacherous enemy are now apparent. Whilst

endeavouring to delay the General's march by expostulations almost abject, he has been steadily collecting men and ammunition for a stand. Sending back the missionaries, letting them see just so much of his preparations as would make them believe him helpless, was part of the same perfidy. They must have passed within a few yards of the two great camps we captured yesterday. For some days it had been suspected by Sir Garnet that all was not quite as satisfactory as report would have it. Even when accounts were most glowing, he neglected no precaution, and well it is for us he did not. On the evening of the 29th, we knew a battle must be fought at Amoaful. The spot was well chosen. There is a large village here, flanked on either side at little distance by the two important towns of Bequoi and Cocofoom. The bush is particularly dense at this point, and a swamp fronts the largest camp, which was stockaded. About a mile ahead of Amoaful is the hamlet of Egginkassi, round which the fight was hottest. All baggage we left behind at Insarful, where Dr. Mackinnon, P.M.O., established his field hospital. This village lies about three miles in front of the Ashantee position, and a mile further on is Quahman, through which also we passed.

The General's idea was to attack in a square, as it were—the 42nd leading, Naval Brigade divided on the right and left flank, with Wood's and Russell's regiments attached to the divisions respectively. The Rifle Brigade defended the rear, and the detachment of the 23rd was held in hand.

Rait's Houssa Artillery marched with the 42nd, and right good service did they. The two flank columns, also under command of Colonel McLeod, had orders to cut their way through the bush, and reach the line of the 42nd. The Ashantee force exposed to us a broad front, resting upon two camps, and the large town of Amoaful. Major Home's Engineers showed the greatest coolness and courage; yes, even the Fantees, in cutting the bush for our advance. They suffered heavily. It was in this dangerous service that poor Buckle received his death wound.

Exactly at eight A.M. the firing began in front of Egginkassi. Within the first few moments it became evident there was to be hot work, but no one could have believed the savages would fight with such desperate determination as the Ashantees showed. Captain Buckle, R.E., fell just as the village was carried, shot through the chest; he died without recovering consciousness. The enemy retired hastily into the bush, as their habit is, and commenced a terrible fusillade. The 42nd followed along the main road, which is flanked by the lowest camp. The Naval Brigade, divided into two companies, entered the wood on the either hand, and worked down towards the road. The 23rd supported the 42nd in its dangerous enterprise. Wood's and Russell's regiments defended the flanks of the position, backed by two companies of Rifles, who formed behind a hasty barricade of plantain trunks. Four companies guarded the road we had lately traversed. In this order the battle was fought, with occasional move-

ments to right or left, as the fire concentrated at one point or another, from 8.0 to 11.45 A.M. The Ashantees resisted the advance of the 42nd towards Amoaful; their numbers enabled them to push great bodies of men right and left round Egginkassi, in the effort to find a weak place. The little street of that village was soon filled with wounded, some terribly hit. The houses were too small and too hot to accommodate more than a few, and the rest lay on the ground in hammocks as they came in. Fortunately there was scarcely a gleam of sun all day. Needless to tell that the medical staff did all that science and tenderness could to relieve the suffering. The doctors out here were picked men, I believe, and hardly they were worked. The 42nd Regiment suffered the heaviest loss. That gallant regiment fought its way through, and carried Amoaful with loud cheers after three hours and three quarters' struggle. Immediately on occupying it the pipes struck up to apprise their Colonel, Brigadier M'Leod, who was with the right wing of the Naval Brigade, of their success.

For a few moments afterwards there was almost a pause, and officers began to compare their watches for registering the duration of the battle. Suddenly the row began again, harder than ever, on our right, where Captain Grubbe was attacked by immense numbers. From this time the action almost concentrated itself on this flank. No effort of our sailors could move the enemy, who had fixed themselves in a dense corner of jungle. It really seemed as if nothing but

the failure of their ammunition would drive them out. Now at one point, now at another, along the hill-crest, they poured down crushing volleys. Life they counted no price, if only a white man could be killed. It was the same desperate obstinacy we had seen at Abrakrampa. They climbed trees to fire with more deadly effect, but the mass just lay down, and shot, and shot, till shot themselves or short of ammunition. Sir Archibald Alison, Brigadier of the white troops, declares he never came under a fiercer fire in India or the Crimea. Sir Archibald did not spare himself nor his staff officer, Captain Despard, R.M., who was always going backwards and forwards on the road.

The Naval Brigade received a reinforcement from Wood's and Russell's regiments, and the three bodies fired volley after volley for nearly three hours without silencing the enemy. At 2.30 P.M. the General ordered up the Kossu men for a charge. They went in boldly, under command of Lieutenant Clowes, singing their war-song and dancing their fantastic dances. This demonstration the Ashantees could not stand, and they gave way at last at 2.45 P.M., after holding their ground six hours and three-quarters.

But not in flight. They retired through long bush paths parallel to the Insarful Road, and speedily opened fire on a convoy of wounded going back to hospital. The bearers threw their hammocks into the bush and ran, but were rallied before the Ashantees broke out, and carried our wounded back to Eggin-kassi, where they remained two hours longer till the road

was clear. A former convoy had passed without molestation. It became evident that our baggage must not be expected for some hours. Pushing on, the Ashantees we had driven out, or a fresh body of them, attacked Quahman just at two o'clock, and again from four to eight P.M. It is even said they went as far as Insarful, and made an attempt on the village also; but this is contradicted. Certain it is that a party of carriers going thence with officers' baggage, under cover of darkness, were fired upon before reaching Quahman, and bolted back, leaving three of their number on the road and all the baggage. These men are said to have come from the south-west, and may probably be that force under Essaman Quantah, whose teeth we drew at Borborassi; but Colonel McLeod is certain that the first attack came from the north, from our direction. Two companies of Rifles had been sent back to reinforce the company or two holding the village, and a wakeful night they had. Sentries report that about four A.M. they saw numbers of men crossing the road south of their station, on whom they fired. This morning, on proceeding to attack, the camp was found deserted. There were two bodies in it, and many traces of blood.

At five P.M., all being quiet around us, and the General feeling confident that Quahman could protect itself, all the forces not needed to keep the road moved into this place. It is a fine village, the main street being quite seventy feet wide and planted with india-rubber-trees. Its houses, however, are for the most part smaller than those of places of less pretension. Streets

and houses were heaped with provisions, rags, and rubbish. Amoaful was evidently a military station, and no more. Very little to plunder remained in it. Some few men found a few shillings' worth of gold-dust hid in the dirtiest corner of a rag, but our best trophies are nine kegs of powder, two great umbrellas, and an immense pile of corn and rice made up for transport. In the camps which were defended with such obstinacy an almost equal quantity of stores was found, and some supply of powder; in fact, it seems likely that the Ashantees may suffer from want of food. Considerable numbers of them fell, but how many I should not like to guess. In the camps we passed, the bodies lay thickly, showing terrible wounds for the most part. Rait's shells made the most slaughter. That assiduous drill we have seen for months past now showed its value; Captain Rait and his officers may be proud of their negro soldiers. In the bush there must have been at least an equal slaughter, and a mere wound from the Snider, if not immediately fatal, must kill in the absence of surgeons. Three prisoners only have been taken up to this, two of whom—Houssas—immediately enlisted in our service. All declare that Amanquattiah is dead at last—shot in the back whilst hurrying out of this village in his chair. We have so often heard such news that one may well doubt, but all three prisoners agree in their story, though interrogated separately. Lord Gifford, who passed the night with his scouts searching the forest paths, is reported to have brought back the intelligence that our chief foe is not only dead but

buried, forty slaves being sacrificed at his grave last night. Search is being made for a 42nd man who is related to have told that he shot a chief in his chair through the back. Appia, also one of the King's great officers, is returned as dead; and the King of Mampon, Generalissimo, wounded.

This morning two companies of Rifles went out to explore a village off our rear, which they found deserted. Five companies of the 42nd, under Major Scott; the Naval Brigade, under Captain Luxmore—Captain Grubb being severely wounded; Russell's Regiment; the 23rd, under Colonel Mostyn; and Captain Rait, R.A., with Lieutenants Saunders and Palmer, in charge of the Houssa battery, went out at one P.M. to burn Bequoi, the third town of Ashantee in size and importance. The opposition met with was not prolonged, but they had it very hot for a time. Lord Gifford ran a serious risk. Under the impression that the Houssas had orders to support him closely, he rushed into the streets of this large town, and found himself surrounded by many hundred enemies. They fired from every side, under cover of houses and through loopholes. Several of our best scouts fell, whilst the Houssas, probably by some misunderstanding, still remained in the bush. But the Naval Brigade, pressing on, carried the black troops with them, and rescued Lord Gifford from his desperate position. Our scoutmaster received only a nasty graze upon the thumb. Besides the scouts, we had one seaman shot dead, three wounded, and seven Houssas slightly wounded. Three umbrellas were brought away, and

another lost. The town made a prodigious smoke. It may have held 15,000 souls, and contained large pottery works.

The official list of casualties is as follows: 42nd Regiment —Major Macpherson, severely wounded; Major Baird, ditto; Captain Whitehead, slightly; Captain Creagh, slightly; Lieutenant Cumberland, severely; Lieutenant Berwick, severely; Lieutenant Annesley, slightly; Lieutenant Mowbery, ditto; Lieutenant Stevenson, slightly; rank and file, two killed and one since dead, 105 wounded. Naval Brigade—Captain Grubbe, severely; Lieutenant Mundy, very dangerously; Lieutenant Rawson, severely; Lieutenant M'Leod, slightly; Lieutenant May, slightly; Lieutenant Maltby, ditto; rank and file, 26. Rifles—Major Stevens, slightly, Lieutenant Smythe, slightly; Lieutenant Sherston, very severely; rank and file, 6. Engineers—Captain Buckle, killed; Major Home, slightly wounded. Sappers—3 wounded. Native labourers—32 killed and wounded. Besides these there are many touched in every regiment who are not returned. All the 23rd have been ordered up at once, and those two hundred of them lying at Prahsu are already on their way. A body of 70 men of the 1st West India have arrived at Insarful.

It is too true that in the action a 42nd man lost his head. They found the poor fellow's body when burying the slain. He evidently lost his way in retiring to the rear badly wounded, and was set upon by these black wretches. I hear that the small detachment of 2nd W.I. behaved very

well and steadily in the attack of Quahman. A sergeant of the 23rd has caused some alarm by his non-appearance, but it seems that the man, finding himself lost, joined the Naval Brigade, and did manful duty with them during the action. The General and staff occupied the village of Egginkassi, or Egginassi, as some call it, whilst the engagement proceeded. Very often the fire made a half circle round our right flank, but Sir Garnet always preserved the pleasant smile which distinguishes him, although the cigar between his lips went out several times. He received a sharp blow from a slug in the puggaree of his helmet, and Dr. Fegan, R.N., standing close by, had a narrow "shave." He wore a tie fastened with a broad ring. Just after attending Colonel Wood, who came in with a slug in his chest, Dr. Fegan advanced from the shade of the tree where the wounded lay, to chat with us. Suddenly he staggered, and at the same moment his ring went spinning down below his waistcoat. A slug had struck it and glanced off. The ring had saved his life.

In Amoaful, though the carriers revelled in plenty, we were hard put to it for subsistence until midday was past. The headquarter baggage* and the field hospital stores either fell into the enemy's hands or were lost in the bush. Dr. Mackinnon, P.M.O., found himself reduced to the very clothes in which he stood, and others were in like case. Sub-Lieutenant

* Three weeks after, at Cape Coast, it was discovered that a Fantee policeman had carried off Colonel Greaves' box, containing invaluable papers and a large sum of money.

Filliter, just risen from sick-bed, came in during the forenoon with two companies of the 2nd W.I. from Quahman. The duty of holding this important town is entrusted to the 2nd W.I. Regiment, under Colonel Webber, commandant. It is certainly a strange place to see at this moment. Under a mighty rubber-tree, upon a bedstead removed from the chief's house, lies Major Macpherson, of the 42nd, wounded in leg and arm. His pleasant face, as cheerful now as if on parade at Aldershot, attracts all the crowd of loungers. There is quite a levée round the bedstead, beside which sits Lieutenant Cumberland, too hard hit for much conversation, but amused by others' talk. He has a notable chair, all carved work and brazen knobs, in regard to which we have many discussions. Do or do not these chairs come from Holland? If they do not, the Ashantees are no mean artists in cabinet-work. Further up the village, at the extreme end, lie Captain Rait's artillery, defending a trench and stockade. You may see a sample of their work in the clearing that extends two hundred yards beyond. When Rait and his Houssas came galloping through the village, what time the beaten Ashantees poured down our right flank, and gave such work to the Naval Brigade, they saw a group of slaves or warriors hurrying towards the bush, with the body of a chief upon their shoulders. Rait himself aimed the shell which dropped among them, and killed each member of the little company. They lie as they ran, chief in his litter, surrounded by dead lieges. I think the number is seven. Rait sits in state upon the King of

Bequoi's throne, under the King of Bequoi's umbrella, and gives soldierly consolation to Lord Gifford, who mourns for his fallen scouts. Meanwhile the work of fortification actively proceeds at this end of the village, where the redoubt will stand.

2nd. After the severe engagement of the 31st, there are many who believe we shall march in without resistance, but the General is not of that opinion. "They will certainly fight again," he said to me during the action, and the prediction proved correct. We started again from Amoaful at 8 A.M. News has come from Captain Butler, who is leading 1,400 Akims in another column of invasion, that he had had a successful skirmish with the enemy near the great lake thirty miles to our eastward. Russell's regiment, supported by two companies of Rifles, and Rait's Artillery, made the advanced guard, under Colonel Macleod. The main body was composed of the 42nd regiment, and the Naval Brigade brought up our rear. Captain Despard had orders to follow with the baggage in the afternoon. Colonel Webber was left, with 80 of the 2nd W.I. as a garrison of Amoaful, now strongly entrenched and stockaded. There was much skirmishing all along the march, and many small ambuscades. Every village, however small, and there are many of them—resisted our advance. We saw abundant evidence how deadly had been our fire in the late engagement. Chiefs on litters lay abandoned in the bush. The road in some parts was blocked with stores and cloths. It was a dreadfully tedious advance,

for each yard of bush must be explored by scouts. Not till 4.30 P.M. did we reach Agimmanu, a little village lost in the forest. Here the main body stayed all night, whilst the advanced guard pushed on to Eduabin. Another stand was expected at the passage of the river Dah or Adah, a broad stream some six miles further. Meanwhile news has reached us that every post along the road has been attacked without success. At Foomanah the affair was rather serious. Lieut. Grant, 6th regiment, distinguished himself by a display of cool courage which earned the praise of all his comrades, but the enemy got in, and had nearly reached the hospital. There were twenty convalescents there who drove them back with difficulty. They then, with characteristic stupidity, fired the town, and were, of course, compelled to retreat by flames of their own raising. In the midst of the row Colonel Colley descended on the scene. This excellent officer has a knack of appearing exactly at the right place. The *mot* he is said to have uttered when news came from post after post of attack on our communications, deserves record. "I must go and stop this," said Colonel Colley, with no note of exclamation. Whereupon he set off, with half-a-dozen policemen, and here and there and everywhere turned up just in time to "stop" it.

The baggage did not reach Agimmanu until after dark, much of it not before 11 P.M., and it had then to be sorted out. Such confusion round the big fires is only seen on a Derby night. But at length rations were served,

many gave up the search for their belongings, and quiet returned.

Next day, the 3rd, all were up and ready at dawn, but we had to wait till 9.30 A.M. for a party of the navals, sent back to escort a convoy. An order had been issued that all baggage should be left behind here; four days' ration was served out, and all men knew that a dash for Coomassie was the programme. Our march was as slow as the day before, for the advanced guard came upon many ambuscades. Rait's artillery made excellent shell practice. About 3 P.M. a flag of truce arrived, with a letter from the king, asking four days' armistice. He complained that we fought "too quick," and confused him. Sir Garnet declined this modest proposal, giving till 9 P.M. to send in his hostages, the queen mother and the heir apparent. Another hour's march, with much firing, brought us to the Dah, where we camped in the bush. It is a shallow stream, some sixty yards broad, and we were soon aware that another battle awaited us in the morning. Russell's regiment pushed across and occupied the further bank with little opposition. Meanwhile, three Ashantees, firing not fifty yards in our rear, turned out all the camp; one of them was promptly captured by two men of the 2nd W.I. Just as we sat down to a well-earned meal, rain began to fall in sheets. No one was prepared for this trial, and the tents had been left behind with other baggage. The General and his staff passed a night as wet and uncomfortable as the soldiers, and at 3 A.M., rain having

just ceased, all the camp turned out to light fires and dry their clothes.

4th. At 6.30 A.M. everything was ready for action, and we began to advance over the excellent bridge which Major Home and his engineers had passed the night in constructing without opposition. The row began at 7.10 A.M., when Colonel Macleod advancing, came upon the Ashantees in great force. The Rifles led, with Wood's and Russell's regiments, Rait's artillery and the 23rd. The style of fighting was the same as at Amoaful, only the savages did not come so close to deliver their fire. They now fired volleys from about forty yards distance, using each inch of cover. We, for our part, lined the road on either side, gradually advancing into the bush. Scarcely an Ashantee could be seen, but their fire was astonishing. Inch by inch we fought our way up towards the village of Adahsu, which lies about half a mile from the river. Companies of the 42nd gradually advanced between our files, as the enemy was beaten back, until, at length, about 2 P.M., word came up that all the Naval Brigade had crossed, and lay along the road. Meanwhile, the Ashantees had tried both flanks, moving down first to left and then to right, with fearful din of drums and horns, and war-songs. Everywhere they met the crashing volleys of the Snider. Our column had indeed no rear, and no weak place, or these undaunted savages would surely have found it. Then news came that the village was carried, and Sir Garnet made one of those bold movements which decide a battle.

"Send all the baggage up," he ordered to Colonel Greaves. Though driven back in front, after seven hours' fighting, the enemy still lay all along both flanks. We knew them now too well to suppose they considered the battle lost, or would have heeded had they thought so. The command was a happy inspiration. With all speed it passed down the line, and our convoy hurried across the bridge and up the road, between two lines of sailors firing volleys. Not an instant's halt or pause was suffered. Slugs flew amongst the carriers all along, dropping several and wounding many; but the panting, terrified wretches were thrust on. Not too minutes after the last of these had passed the creaking timbers, Ashantees were seen crossing the road in our rear. Five minutes earlier they had been in the thick of the convoy, and no man can guess the result. But it got safe through, though with loss, into the tiny village, and there halted, a monstrous heap of men and boxes and hammocks. Meanwhile, the enemy burnt and destroyed the remains of our camp across the bridge.

Still the attacks went on, in front and on both flanks. The Naval Brigade, on our extreme rear, lost one man killed, one mortally wounded, and several hurt, at the same moment that seven men out of ten, serving a gun in front, were killed or wounded; amongst them poor Lieutenant Eyre, who survived but half an hour. We buried him on the spot. Then the 42nd were ordered to clear the road, and in a moment afterwards the wounded began to return. Captain Moore and Lieutenant Wauchope scarcely went a yard. But gallant fellows remaining

pressed on, whilst the General waited at the village in a furious din of musketry on all sides. At 4 P.M. Sir A. Alison sent back a letter, announcing that the enemy were panic-struck, in full flight, dropping chairs, litters, and umbrellas. This news, passing down the line, caused a general cheer, which had the unexpected effect of causing the Ashantees to abandon the contest. Scarcely a shot fired afterwards. "On to Coomassie!" was the cry. The heap of baggage disentangled itself, as the bearers rose to their feet. Half an hour more saw us *en route* again, the most wearied and the hungriest finding strength for this last advance. We hurried on, past three villages, up to Karsi, where a halt had been expected. But there was still an hour of daylight, and we pushed forward. Just before dusk we reached the celebrated swamp, pestilential with floating bones and rotten flesh of victims. Ten minutes more, up a rocky incline, took us to the market-place, and our goal was won. Three ringing cheers announced to the flying king that he had lost his capital.

CHAPTER XI.

THE METROPOLIS OF MURDER.

Coomassie—The Frames in the Market-place—The Queen Mother's Embassy—Mr. Dawson's Boy Arrives—Alarm caused by Refugees—The General's Quarters—Post of the Naval Brigade and of Rait's Artillery—Looting by the Natives—Hanging of a Policeman—Architecture and Appearance of the Town—The Palace—Contents—The King's Bedchamber—His Golden Stool—Inventory of Royal Treasures—The Aristocratic Quarter—Manners and Customs of Ashantee Ladies—Publicity of Life—The Reek of Murder—Customs of Dahomey and Ashantee compared—The Market-place—Friendliness of Townspeople Remaining—The Fallen Fetish Tree—The Royal Cellar—War Drums, Man Baskets, and Horns—The Smell of Coomassie—The Charnel-house—Monotonous Murder—The Wounded Sent Back—Koffee Kalcalli's Promise—Suspicious Behaviour of Mr. Dawson—Orders Issued to Advance—Tremendous Rain—Prize Agents go to the Palace at Midnight—A Curious Diary Discovered—Incidents Therein—Burning of Coomassie.

Coomassie, Feb. 5th.

A TOWN over which the smell of death hangs everywhere, and pulsates on each sickly breath of air—a town where vultures hop at one's very feet, too gorged to join the filthy flock

preening itself on gaunt dead trunks that line the road; where blood is plastered, like a pitch coating, over trees and floors and stools—blood of a thousand victims, yearly renewed; where headless bodies make common sport, where murder pure and simple, monotonous massacre of bound men, is the one employment of the king, and the one spectacle of the populace. At every shuddering breath the stomach turns, so pestilential is the air; but in this atmosphere the inhabitants pass their life. They heartily eat whilst human blood streams down the street, whilst bodies unburied bleach and swell before their eyes. The child does not shrink as executioners pass by; the bride turns not an inch from her way to avoid a festering corpse. Verily this is the metropolis of murder. The odour of putridity is the air approved by its inhabitants. The sight they love is severed necks, and spouting blood, and corpses that line the road in a dead procession. Their houses are built to command the widest view. They are stained red, that the colour of blood may always rejoice their eyes. Beside the doors, and along the stucco friezes, one group is never absent—a fantastic figure flourishing his knife over a helpless victim. Murder is their delight, their joy. Though the empire be tottering under the incessant drain; though their own lives are not worth an hour's purchase, their appetite will not be restrained. Children and slaves, which make their savage wealth, are sacrificed with glee to keep up the show. Nowhere are so many dead trees, poisoned by the noxious exhalations which they love to

breathe; nowhere is animal life so scant. The pretty lizards which rustle and hunt over every other town, have fled this place; only vultures abound with sickening tameness, and kites which sweep close to the ground with plaintive twittering.

Such is Coomassie, the doomed town we have reached at last. It is ours now, and the carnival of blood has ceased—for a time. English sailors occupy the market-place, English guns threaten the palace, English troops camp around the General who has brought low this metropolis of murder. The savage king is hiding in the bush, where, probably, he pursues with redoubled eagerness that passion for blood which has destroyed his empire. The Ashantee kingdom was established in massacre—by massacre has it lived, and by massacre perished. The strength of the nation has been sapped by this ceaseless tax of life. See yonder, across the market-place, those frames of wicker, which Rait's Houssas are breaking up to burn. There were eight of them in line half an hour ago. Those frames were built to accommodate the vast umbrellas, silken or velvet, belonging to the officers of state. They marked, as one may say, the grand stand, from whence high potentates daily witnessed slaughter. Looking upon them, we cannot resist the temptation to lend the Houssas a helping hand, and to pile their honest fires with those memorials of cruelty.

We did not reach Coomassie, after the last fight at Adahsu, without receiving another embassy. The queen

mother tried her influence with Sir Garnet, sending down the body servant of Mr. Dawson, the chief of the king's Fantee prisoners. With him she despatched three people, two boys and a girl, whom she chose to call hostages, but whom the servant confessed to be slaves of her household. The woman halted at the sight of the 42nd, fell on her knees, and vociferously implored mercy. Sir Archibald was much too busy to notice her at the moment, and when he inquired, she was gone. The boys reached Sir Garnet, who paid no attention to them. Mr. Dawson's servant, who spoke English well, could give us no information of value. He walked somewhat breathlessly, before the General's mule, and answered his questions, but to little purpose. He did not know whither the king was fled. After Amoaful, the defeated army ran back to Coomassie, causing such a panic that the inhabitants straightway bolted into the forest, nor returned until next day. We had some excitement also with three Houssa slaves escaped, who hung in the bush along our line, and twice caused the troops to lie down with rifles ready. At length one of them found courage to show himself openly, and we pressed on with redoubled speed. Another of those triangular white flags, which mean peace in Ashantee, caused delay, but this signified no more than the other. And thus we reached Coomassie, as I have told in the last chapter.

Before night had fairly fallen, all our men had been assigned to quarters. Gigantic fires blazed in every street, not less to give a light much needed, than to dissipate the fumes of

putrefaction hanging over the town. The General took up his abode in a large alcove facing the street, but high above it, where, full in view of friend and foe, by light of half-a-dozen candles and two big fires, he dined, consulted, and wrote despatches. The Naval Brigade occupied the market-place, whence, as we soon noticed, came the sickliest smell of death. Rait's Artillery occupied a *trivia* just above, from which position they could crush any force attempting to disturb us. But far were the Ashantees from such a thought! The 42nd and the Rifles, with our trusty detachment of the 23rd had quarters given them higher up the town. A crowd of Ashantees remained, with whom we got along very well. It was too dark for anything but dinner, and when guards were posted, all sat down with hearty appetite to rations. But the Fantees, Kroomen, and native levies, at once began to loot, and in an hour's time houses were blazing. Tired as they were, our men had to turn out to preserve order, and to save the town, but no measure less strong than hanging a policeman could stop the licence. This was done by command of Col. McLeod about twelve o'clock. The wretched boy howled, as it seemed to me, for a full hour. His body hung on the tree till ten o'clock next day, an ugly spectacle. Others of the police, of the Bonnys, Kossus, and Houssas were very severely flogged. The Palace had a narrow escape. Probably a third part of the place was burnt, and fears were entertained for our stores and ammunition.

In the morning we surveyed what was remaining of our conquest. Coomassie covers a very large space of ground —to speak of it still in the present tense. It has many handsome houses, all built in the same style. The front is open, raised about four feet from the ground. Here sit the inhabitants, and watch the dreadful spectacles provided for their amusement. Chiefs' houses have a long *façade* of dead wall on either side, profusely ornamented with stucco devices in high relief. The lower part is painted red, and polished. All living-rooms lie behind, and little care seems to be given them. In some houses, however, they cover a very large piece of ground, room beyond room, always opening on a courtyard, and huts beyond. The king's palace is really a handsome building, of stone, faced with stucco, and extremely solid. It has two floors and a belvidere, used for lumber. An open battlement surmounts the roof, from which one commands an extensive view. But the palace is apparently used as a treasure-house exclusively. The King prefers his native architecture, which is not without elegance, as I have already shown. The court in which lies his bed-chamber is prettily adorned with stucco ornaments and columns, in which the taste of his Arab councillors could plainly be observed. The bed-chamber itself is a low, dark room, on the ground floor, hung with cloth of country silk, both on walls and ceiling. It is approached by a door panelled in little plates of gold and silver. A silk bedstead with curtains stands at one end, and a low divan of the same

stuff at the other. Two swords lie by the King's bedside upon the mattress, both of them silver-hilted. The natives say, and the missionaries confirm, that here was deposited the monstrous nugget, which made the pride of Ashantee regalia —a mass of virgin gold, nearly eighteen inches long by twelve inches high. This is the golden "stool" so often mentioned. Needless to say that we found it not.

The rest of the building is simply stored with loot, although it seems probable that the most valuable articles have been removed. I made out a list of objects noticed in my visit. *Imprimis*, a great number of umbrellas, some very handsome, and one of black and red velvet in alternate squares, bound with gold lace, and with a golden top, perfectly new, about ten feet in diameter. The umbrella of an Ashantee chief is his standard in war, and bears on its apex the crest or insignia of his family. When in danger, this crest is snatched off, if possible, that the umbrella may remain unidentified. A quantity of common pot figures, Highland Mary, two little busts of the Duke of Wellington, etc. etc. A number of clocks, various, all stopped with the rust of years. A very ancient coatee belonging to the 1st West Indian, and shako of incredible shape, probably contemporaneous. Calabashes and stools, beautifully bound with silver. A bird-organ, playing, as advertised, "O, rest thee, babe," "Slow broke the light," "Adeste Fideles," etc. etc. Portrait of a gentleman in oils. Four gold masks, very heavy, quite pure, valued at £150 to £200 each. A great quantity of old

Dutch engravings in a portfolio. Numbers of big toilette glasses. The King's plate, mostly Dutch metal. Many guns, one double barrel, silver-mounted. A lot of kettles. A gold-bound lantern. Boxes of embossed silver. Two tea-tables, one inlaid with gold, one with silver. Silver and gold chibouks. A magic lantern. A handsome pix. Picture of the new Custom House on the River Thames. Ivory model of a ship. Chairs beautifully carved. A collection of "stoney marbles." A beautiful "May hen," as we call the bird in Cape Colony, stalked, all disconsolate, about the courtyards, and ran up to each person who entered, arching her pretty neck, with its fanlike yellow crest, for notice.

The morning was occupied in writing letters and telegrams. In company with Mr. Sanders, R.A., I wandered over as much of the town as one can see in a noonday walk. There is little to be told, in general, about these negro capitals, which has not been often told before, but the destruction of a savage monarchy so old, so strange, and so famous as that of Ashantee, may well engage one to risk a commonplace or a repetition. It is the crash of an historic power. We read of the Ashantees and their golden capital under direction of our sister's governess, in the schoolroom; the story of their destruction will be a new page for our grandchildren. For destroyed they are, unless the tribes so long enslaved under a heavy tribute of blood and gold are too utterly crushed to take their opportunity. Without counting his loss of men, which I cautiously set down at about 3000,

the king has expended or lost an amount of powder which will need years to replace. Hundreds of guns have been spoiled, the spirit of the people shaken, and their prestige destroyed. The disintegration of the empire has already begun, when a great chief, Adansi, proposes to evacuate his territory, and seek refuge beyond our frontier. King Gaman, and the Denkera people, who have so often rebelled, will surely take this opportunity for another attempt. The inland tribes will be encouraged to resist Ashantee exactions with more spirit. Amongst the heriditary enemies of the nation, there is abundance of powder and warlike stores. Individual courage avails little in bush fighting against guns, for close quarters and the use of steel are impossible. For these reasons it may be credited that Ashantee *deleta est*. Let us give longer glance at the fallen capital before it fades again from civilized view, behind the mist of negro barbarism.

I can easily believe that Coomassie had 40,000 inhabitants. It covered an immense space, and although in many parts the houses stood very far apart, in others they made a labyrinth of walls and passages. Especially this was the case in the lower town, where a great block of buildings faced the palace. At what point this dwelling ended and the next began, impossible to discover. One little quadrangle, with its four alcoves *à jour*, its crimson basement, and its designs of polished stucco, led on into another, endlessly. The fire had passed over all this quarter, which was evidently aristocratic; but it had done no harm, except to burn the thatch.

Many treasures of savage luxury still remained, in shape of stools, silver-bound, powder belts of leopard skin, with silver-hilted knives stuck through in cases, guns, bags of cloth, fetishes, mats, and charms. These latter hung on pegs upon the wall, many of them still in process of manufacture. I take it that Ashantee ladies amused themselves with "work" just like their European sisters, but they evidently lacked the patience so remarkable with English dames. Of this we had ample proof, for the number of mats or quilts completed bore no proportion to those begun. Ashantee ladies have a reprehensible practice of wrapping the remnants of their dinner in unfinished works of art. The denizens of the king's seraglio were especially addicted to this untidy habit. Those happy individuals dwelt all together in a maze behind the palace. They may each have had an alcove to herself, but certainly no more, and in this publicly-private apartment they really seem—if an Oxford expression be admissible—to have "made hay" when the disaster arrived. Such a heap of varied rubbish as each alcove of each quadrangle presented could be matched only in a rag-shop. Few articles, except charms and fetishes, hung on the walls. All had been pulled down, and mixed with the personal wardrobe, the jewellery, the furniture, and the ancient treasures which ladies collect. Amongst the pile was much of curious, and something of valuable, but dirt and vermin smothered the whole. It is worth notice, that only in Cape Coast Castle, and in King Koffee's palace, have vermin been observed by our people.

But a point more curious is the utter publicity in which the Ashantees live. So far as I could make out, in the aristocratic quarter and in the seraglio, there was absolutely no provision for domestic privacy. The great chief had his own sleeping room, perhaps,—excepting in the palace, I found no evidence of such a thing—but the ordinary gentleman, such a one as inhabited only a modest quadrangle, or two perhaps, must have wooed and won, bought and sold, held council or made quarrel, lived, fallen sick, and died, always in presence of his household. I do not here refer to sanitary arrangements, which are equally strict and decent in all Ashantee dwellings; whereby a striking contrast is apparent, for the Fantees are shamelessly, and in truth unaccountably filthy, nor know what decency signifies. The smells of Coomassie are never those of sewage. It is the national crime of murder which reeks to Heaven from each blood-stained quarter of the town.

I don't think I have explained why human slaughter amongst the Ashantees is worthy of such a strong term as murder. No person sane in mind and body would so describe the "customs" of Dahomey, or the sacrifices common in many parts of the world. For there is a very evident distinction. Elsewhere, the poor victim is offered with an object. It may be horrid that a human being should be destroyed in propitiation of an idol, or merely to bear some foolish message from a living savage to a savage dead. But here there is at least an object, a purpose in view, or the pretext of one. But in Ashantee nothing of the

sort. That nation only kills for the sake of killing, without motive to avow, or superstition to be satisfied. With no rites, but with brutal mockery, the deed is done. And therefore the negroes themselves draw a distinction between the customs of Dahomey and those of Ashantee. The king is too intelligent and too humane to approve a practice which weakens his kingdom and makes him an object of horror to surrounding tribes. Monsieur Bonnat and his fellow-captives all relate that Koffee Kalcalli avoided the sight of executions as often as was possible; and caused his umbrella to be depressed when he passed a headless body: but he was powerless, as greater kings have been, to stop a custom which has become the popular amusement. Be it hoped that our strong hand has made these horrors to cease, with the existence of the kingdom.

A view of Coomassie would be very incomplete without the description of the great market-place and the palace. Unfortunately, I must draw on imagination if I would describe the busy scene each morning showed in the former place. Here it was the troops formed in the gloaming, and gave three cheers for the Queen, that night they fought the battle of Adahsu, and marched on the panic-struck capital. Then, whilst our little force stood in centre of the vast space, a dusky crowd of warriors looked on from every avenue, conquered but not dismayed. They stood there, arms in hand, for we were far too weak to attempt surrounding the town. Closer, within an arm's length, were eager observers, probably

slaves, who for a smile and a pleasant word brought buckets of pellucid water, and promised eggs and fowls for the morrow. But in the night our villainous Fantees frightened all away, with their fires and their cowardly ill-usage, and the secret of that sweet water none ever found, as many poor wretches, now groaning with dysentery, too cruelly can testify. The market-place in itself has nothing to interest. It is just an open space, with houses at intervals along its northern side, the room between filled with tall reeds, and the eternal bush immediately behind. Across the area lies that fetish tree, the fall of which created such consternation on January 6th. East and west runs the main street, full eighty yards wide, bordered with such houses as have been sketched. On the south two broad streets open, skirting the aristocratic quarter of which I lately spoke. But the palace, the stone part of it, that is, we saw in pristine magnificence. Monsieur Bonnat thinks that nothing had been removed from this part, in which, however, the king never resided, preferring his native architecture. The contents of the museum, for museum it should be called, I have detailed. The exterior was surrounded, as were all the buildings of the palace, with a tall fence of reeds, closely bound together. The stone house was very solid and comfortable. It had a courtyard, under the sheds of which the king kept his cellar of palm wine—of champagne and brandy too, they say—his umbrellas, new and old, his chairs and man-baskets of state, covered with scarlet cloth and leopard skin. Elsewhere were his war drums,

adorned with human heads; one missing, by the bye, supposed to be Sir Charles Macarthy's. His war horns made to imitate a throat, with tongue of scarlet cloth, and jaws but too real, hung round. From the courtyard two stout staircases mounted, one to the first floor, where the art treasures of the monarchy were stored, and one to a walk around the roof, passing a bell-turret. Behind this stone house lay the favourite residence of the king. Here the architecture was native, in quadrangles profusely ornamented, lattice-work of stuccoed wood, and columns fluted fantastically. In that pretty court where lay the royal bedchamber, numbers of tortoises were crawling, and every beam had its dangling *saphi*. Many of these were fair specimens of illuminating, and Arabic chirography. The *zenana* lay behind.

But what I have not described, nor ever could, though I gave pages to the horrid matter, is the smell we found in Coomassie. The town was kept scrupulously clean as regards sewage, but the people positively like to have the odour of dead flesh in their nostrils. Victims are never buried, but, when dropping to pieces, are cast either into the swamp, or in an awful ditch opposite the fetish tree. I visited it. Nowhere in the world is such a sight, nowhere such a stench. Bodies lie in every stage of corruption, swollen to giant size. Several doctors accompanied me, and one of them, Dr. Waters, had the courage to count the *fresh* bodies lying on the heap. They were fourteen, amongst them a woman and a child. Several more we had found in the streets on entering, left as

they fell under the executioner's sword, with the severed head beside them, and a few palm-leaves thrown over their rotting flesh.

With horrors like these I could disgust the reader for pages. But to what good describe the stools blood-washed each spring and autumn, though the name and honours of those who used them have been long since forgotten? Murder most foul it is, at the best,but the dull wit of these barbarians can devise nought but the most prosaic and monotonous of horrors. None of de Quincey's "fine art" about their massacres,—nothing but the grotesque. But of these things, at least, of the ghastly glory of them—there is an end. Coomassie no longer exists.

About noon all the sick and wounded went back to Adahsu, under charge of Wood's and Russell's regiments. All the day through there was coming and going of messengers between Sir Garnet and the king. Koffee Kalcalli promised to return in the afternoon, but a sharp shower gave him a decent excuse for neglecting to keep faith. Mr. Dawson, the head prisoner, now released, was very busy. All the Fantee captives had been found in the mission-house, chained to logs. They had been threatened with death on the 4th, but our rapid movement saved them. By the bye, although we doubtless owe Mr. Dawson some acknowledgment for the intelligence he sent down, Lord Gifford tells me that the gentleman's proceedings, at the capture, were open to suspicion. Mr. Dawson met him in the outskirts of the town, and

Lord Gifford instantly ordered him to guide the scouts to the palace. Dawson took them all round the capital, no trifling walk, and brought them back to the place he found them. Lord Gifford threatened to shoot him for treachery, but was told that "he really felt so confused, he did not know where the palace was." Rather inconsistent on the part of a man who had shown such presence of mind. Our booty might have been vastly different if we had taken the palace half an hour earlier.

At night an order was issued for an advance to Bantama, the royal sepulchre, next day. The 42nd were to head the march, the Rifles, 23rd, hospital, and baggage to follow. The Naval Brigade in rear. But our officers had by this time mastered the secrets of Sir Garnet's strategy. Little was said about it, but every one felt convinced the real order would prove to be "right about face!" In the night tremendous rain fell, and lucky we thought ourselves to have such sound roofs over us. About midnight, when all was quiet, prize agents went quietly to the palace, and began to collect what trophies could be found most portable. By 2 A.M. all was completed, and the loads packed.

Dining with Captain Rait and his officers, I was shown a diary which might have been vastly interesting. It had been kept, in English, by one of the Fantee prisoners, and narrated the events between the 27th ult., when the army went out to fight us at Amoaful, and the morning of the 4th inst. But I found only two or three details worthy transcription. It

appears that the Ashantees made no effort to conceal their defeat at Amoaful, but rather exaggerated it. The king was not present, as many had thought. On the day of battle, says the diary, the prisoners saw him go past "with his kingly appearance, but looking very sad," to consult the shades of his ancestors at Bantama. He carried a fly-whisk in his hand, and motioned courteously to them with it. A few "momomé women and fetish men began to play about," during the day, but the town was too anxious for such customs, and they soon withdrew. The "momomé women," as M. Bonnat informs me, are wives of chiefs and celebrated warriors, who, when their husbands are absent on the campaign, have a sacred custom of playing at war about the streets, armed with wooden guns. Towards evening, the head of a white man was brought into town. The people received it with alarm and abhorrence, although a prince of the blood royal exhibited the trophy. "What is this the prince has brought on us?" they said. "A white man's head! We do not know what will come of this!" I noticed no other details of interest. The presence of Captain Glover, who was but ten miles off when the diary begins, is not once alluded to. Apparently, the writer was ignorant of it.

Punctually at 6 A.M. we paraded next day, in the order announced. But at every block of houses stood groups of Kroomen, police, and sailors, provided with bundles of reed tied up as torches. Home and his engineers, at the palace, waited the signal for firing their mines. And, as Sir Garnet

passed down the rocky slope, that word was given. To every quarter the torch-bearers rushed. Slow matches glimmered under the royal walls. Fifteen minutes more, the smoke of Coomassie covered all the heaven like a veil, whilst, with roar and crash, the murder-king's palace fell prone upon the earth. *Deleta est!*

CHAPTER XII.

DIVIDING THE SPOIL.

Fording the Swamp—A Flooded Track—Dha Bridge Submerged—Long Halts and Delays—Agimmanu again—Heavy Rain—Travelling with Wounded—Our Prisoners—A Prince of Ashantee—His Fine Manner—The Story of Captain Butler's Invasion—Shameful Desertion of Akims—March in the Darkness—Alarms Unexpressed—Amoaful Levelled—Mr. Dawson and his Baggage—Suspected Spies—The Six Heroes of Wassaw—Adansi Proposes to Capitulate—A Hammock for our Prince—All Villages Burnt—Gigantic Worms—The King of Adansi's Palace—His Application for Terms—Sir Garnet Arrives—Koffee Kalcalli wants Peace—Superior Judgment of the King overruled by his Fetish Men—Attacks upon the Road—A Private, 2 W.I. loses his Head—Engineer Wounded—On to Quisa—Lieutenant Richmond ill—Akrofoomuh—The Control Service—Captain Glover's Expedition—Cool Disregard of the Ashantees for his Force—Gallant Ride of Captain Sartorius—Utter Destruction of Coomassie—Colonel Festing at Prahsu—Patrol Adventure—1040 oz. of Gold arrive from the King—23rd Regiment leaves in the 'Tamar'—Return of Sir Garnet—Great Enthusiasm—Reception at Government House—Feminine Demonstrations—The Loot on View—The First Day's Sale—Droll Incidents—Silks and Cloths—The King's Bracelets—His Caps of State—A Gold Mask—The King's Knife—Necklaces—Stools, Silver Bound—The Royal Plate Chest—Sir C. Macarthy's Tankard—Chief Executioner's Girdle—The King's Pictures—African High Art—Aggry and Popo Beads—The Silver Casket—The Departure—A Government Begging—Adventures on Board the 'Benin'—The Fires put out—Towed into Port.

Agimmanu, February 6th.

EIGHT A.M., this morning, saw us on the march seawards. It

had been expected that the foul swamp which half encircles Coomassie would be greatly deepened by the rain of last night, but we found no perceptible difference. A filthy moat, indeed, is this. It seems to reek of pestilence. Human skulls float on the surface; and in wading one kicks up a mud of rotten bones. But all agree that Coomassie is a healthful place. In five years and a half's residence the prisoners saw no cause to believe its vile atmosphere pestilential. After crossing the swamp, we marched quickly along the track, until reaching the first stream. Through this, in the advance, we had plunged bodily, nor found the water above mid-leg. But now, for two hundred yards, it lay thigh deep, and the channel itself bore a raging flood thirty feet wide, and deeper than a man's height. Very long and wearisome was the halt, whilst the engineers threw a floating bridge across it. The advance guard of sailors had scrambled over with their usual ingenuity, by means of some logs hastily collected, but this rude device did not commend itself to science. An hour and a half we waited. I myself passed an unpleasant *quart d'heure*, standing on a round log in mid-stream, whilst the final touches of the axe were added. Unable to retire for the the crowd behind, and with a stalwart Fantee brandishing his axe within six inches of my head, I had to balance myself as best I might. On the other side we made a "spurt" to catch the Navals, but rejoined them only at the Dha. I counted ten dead Ashantees on the road itself, swollen in a ghastly manner. It does not seem that the hyenas, vultures,

or other creatures of prey, do their scavenger work efficiently in this land. We saw nowhere any trace of them on the dead bodies. Probably they hunt by sight alone, and so a carcass generally escapes them in such thick wood.

The Ashantees, though they had wrecked our camp on the other side, had not injured the bridge, which was fortunate. It lay nearly two feet under water, and the stream still rose. A broken bridge would have delayed us many hours. Major Home's work had creditably resisted the flood, only a few of the foot-beams having floated off. Men were able to cross even whilst the repairs went on, but slowly. The carriers were sent over swimming. For the rest of us we stripped, and walked the yielding bridge. But it was very toilsome work, and the afternoon had well advanced before the rear-guard began to cross. The General and staff had the intention of pushing through the same night to Agimmanu, under escort of the General's policemen, thus securing leisure for the composition of their despatches to-morrow. I accompanied them, and a weary walk it was. Just at dusk we reached this place, dead beat. A quarter of a mile from camp I was overtaken by the cheeriest of officers, who had travelled all the way in his hammock, and stepped out of it "fresh as a daisy." He began to chat about dissolution of Parliament, the intentions of Government, and such like pleasant topics,—to me, who marched as in a dream, mechanically putting one foot before the other. I somewhat appreciated the vehemence of Hotspur on a like occasion, though far was my

friend from the imputation of carpet-knighthood. Having sent on my boys an hour in advance, I hoped to find tea ready, at least; but they were yet discoursing of Coomassie and its wonders to a crowd of open-mouthed Fantees. I find it recorded in my diary that I wished to murder them. At Agimmanu we regained our tents and heavy baggage, and I dined in immense comfort with hospitable *confrères* of the 'Standard' and 'Illustrated London News.' There was heavy rain all night, and the Rifles and 42nd, left behind at the river, had for the second time a miserable camp on the Dha bank.

7th. Having finished my despatches, I started at 3 P.M. with a train of sick and wounded, under medical charge. Just as we left, the remaining troops marched in. The General waits till to-morrow. Thirty or forty hammocks were in our convoy, under charge of Dr. Mackinnon, P.M.O., and Drs. Jackson, Wolfries, and Kynsey. At leaving Agimmanu, three prisoners were released, gently but literally kicked back towards their capital. Three more, of greater importance, the Navals carry with them. One of them is a prince, whom we call Bosomnogo, the most courteous and charming of savages. Tied to him is a captain, Cocoforo, with the "c" strongly aspirated. Both of them were captured in the act of removing guns and powder from the palace, after bringing to the General a message from the King. The prince has an excellent face, very good-looking and intelligent. There is something quite high-bred about his manner, but the Ashantees

especially pride themselves upon their courtesy. When taken, he wore a bracelet of strung nuggets, sandals heavily plated with gold, and in his hand a bag of dust worth nearly £500; so, at least, he complained to Monsieur Bonnat. Both he and the captain were dressed in clothes of native manufacture, strikingly clean, and arranged like an ancient toga. They were white, handsomely marked with a blue pattern. The prince showed himself particularly indignant at the manner in which he was carried down. "Here am I," said he to Monsieur Bonnat, "a prince of Ashantee, tied like a slave to one of my captains. That third man is only a warrior! It is infamous!" Monsieur Bonnat reminded him that the Ashantees had kept their prisoners, whites and one a woman, seven weeks in irons, without any cause at all. But an Ashantee prince could not see the parallel.

On the way down we met Captain Butler, going to rejoin Sir Garnet with a miserable tale. From Mr. Lowe, who was selected for that service when Captain Butler applied for a fighting doctor, I have received full details of the disgraceful story of his Akim expedition. He reached Prahsu Akim in twenty-eight hours of marching, and found Captain Butler, with Captain Brabazon and Lieutenant M'Gregor, on one side the ford, while the Akims were comfortably encamped on the other—the protected bank, of course. They had three kings, Cobin Afua, Koffee Denkera, and Daku. After three days' delay these valorous monarchs crossed, not for business, but for a pala-

ver. With much urging and many threats, they promised to get their men over by 2 P.M. But at the appointed time no preparations for departure were visible, and the English officers resolutely set out to rejoin Sir Garnet, leaving the wretched crew to their own devices. The kings, much alarmed, pursued them with prayers and protestations, but they marched back to Burnassi, seven miles in our territory. Thither king Daku sent a message, swearing by all his gods he would cross next morning. Captain Butler was persuaded to return, but, on reaching the camp, he found things in their ordinary condition, and not one man across the river. Then, whilst the other officers went over that hateful ford, Mr. Lowe lost patience. He ran a muck amongst the cooking pots, the huts and shanties of the camp, smashing and levelling everything he could reach. Instantly the crowd, as if they had only been awaiting this demonstration, rushed into the river, and began their tumultuous invasion. But at every camp the same violence had to be repeated, with less and less acquiescence from the chiefs. On the 27th, when Lieutenant Paget joined them, the force took a village called Akina, feebly defended by the Ashantees. Thence the Akims declined to advance, and when, on the 31st, they heard the sound of our heavy firing at Amoaful, their kings waited upon Captain Butler, and informed him that they meant to return at once. With calm decision this announcement was made, and no arguments or threats could shake their resolution. That night they began their retreat, and

the officers had no choice but to follow. The Ashantees showed a thorough knowledge of their foes when they concentrated all their strength to meet the white troops only.

It was a dreadfully slow march we had, with so many hammocks to look after. Night fell when we were still a long way from Amoaful, and in that forest it was a darkness to be felt. A horrid fear dwelt dumb in every one's mind. We had passed several corpses on the road itself whilst daylight lasted, corpses that had been lying near a week under an African sun. Suppose that in the dark one stumbled—the idea is too horrible to dwell on even now. There was not a candle or lantern with the convoy. For an hour and a half we had to feel the path, each one touching the man in front. Every moment the word came back, "A fallen tree!" "A root!" to warn those behind of mischances in the van. But not then had I to learn what indomitable pluck dwells in our medical service. One or two of the doctors, elderly men, had scarcely strength left to walk, but I declare there were jokes made, and laughter rang out beneath that pitchy canopy of leaves. At 8 P.M. almost we answered the challenge of the sentry, and came into the welcome blaze of his bonfire. I went to seek Colonel Webber, the commandant, whilst the doctors had yet to stow their patients comfortably away.

Amoaful was not to be recognized. Colonel Webber, who was found unwell,—much to my regret—had levelled every house excepting two or three which guarded his left flank. Long sheds had been built in rows outside the fort,

to accommodate our returning troops. The garrison of 2nd W. I. camped inside the stockade, under canvas. Under one of the sheds I took up quarters for the night, during which some of Rait's Houssas looted two brass pans and a pitcher-basin which made part of my boys' Ashantee spoil. To-morrow, the General will be here, and the camp breaks up.

8*th*. We woke to-day in a real Scotch mist. Decidedly, the rainy season begins on this high land much earlier than at the coast. The nearest comrade of my bivouac proved to be Mr. Dawson, a tall man, nearly if not quite black, with patient expression. It seems that he has made nearly all his fellow-prisoners, seventy in number, to carry, and well loaded they are. I should like to overhaul those packages. One prisoner is an old, old woman, who travels in a cloth suspended upon a pole. Four men relieve each other in bearing her. I could not ascertain whether it was a work of charity on their part, or no. Started early in the forenoon with Captain Grubbe and his sailors, Colonel Mostyn, 23rd, and his detachment. Without adventure we reached Akhankuarsi, passing Quahman full of 1st W.I. regiment, and Insarful garrisoned by convalescent sailors. In the afternoon, great excitement, and a rush from all parts of the camp towards the fort. The alarm is caused by six black heroes, who have marched in under shelter of a great Union Jack. Our servants and carriers loudly proclaim them spies, and they undergo some rough usage before it is credited that they are Wassaws, who have gallantly passed all through the hostile

country. They bear another message from the Adansi people, representing that they are anxious to cross our frontier and find refuge in the Protectorate. These Wassaws had come all alone from their homes flying their Union Jack.

9th. Prince Bosomnogo complains of a tumour in the groin, and innocently proposes that he be sent back. Captain Cocofoco and the "common warrior" are to be hostages for him. As Captain Grubbe fails to see the advantage of this proposition, a tent is slung upon a pole, and the prince climbs into it with great courtesy. All the villages along this part of our route are burnt, but by whom does not appear. The rains have brought out a species of gigantic worm, often a foot and a half in length, which meanders like a snake along the path. The river at Kiangboassu rose twelve feet during the floods, but it has greatly subsided. Travelling with the Naval Brigade, I reached Foomanah about breakfast time. This town also is levelled, except the palace of the Adansi king, now used as a hospital. This building it was which the Ashantees nearly reached in their attack upon the place. The patients defended it. No contemptible residence is the king of Adansi's, and it is no wonder that potentate, camping in the wet bush, desires to return. The number of courtyards and their ornament interest us, but we are particularly struck —being doctors here—with the admirable arrangements for sanitation. In this respect, the Ashantees have but little to learn. In fact, we have taken a hint or two from them. I found here Lieutenant Grant, 6th regiment, who distinguished him-

self during the action, Drs. Lowe, Catherwood, and Suttle, with Commissioners Lundy and Hamilton. The medical staff was presently reinforced by Dr. Mackinnon, P.M.O., Drs. Jackson, Wolfries, Kynsey, Waters, and more besides. Major Russell's regiment is here. Colonel Wood has passed the hill.

10*th*. I am awaiting the promised visit of the King of Adansi, who sent a flag of truce three days ago to the commandant of this place, requesting permission to deliver up his arms. The General has just arrived, with the intention of staying until the 13th inst., induced to this delay by a message from King Koffee. His Ashantee Majesty, who has not yet ventured back to his capital, reiterates his urgent wish for peace, and regrets that he cannot express all his ideas upon the subject, having no longer a scribe in his service. Sir Garnet replied verbally, that he would remain two clear days on the frontier, to give the king an opportunity of sending a great chief down to palaver. But though it is a duty not to miss the chance, few entertain serious hopes of an arrangement. The king, I take it, is quite clever enough to understand that we have done our worst, and why, when his capital is burnt, and the returning enemy within three miles of his frontier, why should he voluntarily engage to give a heavy sum, the payment of which, seven days since, would have saved half his humiliation? If the king would not make terms to save his palace, it seems very improbable that he should do so now. They have heard nothing at headquarters of any pro-

position from the king of Adansi, except the information furnished by Colonel Colley. We are told that he lies with 1500 men, a mile or two in rear of this place, waiting an opportunity to surrender; but how this should be known passes investigation.

It appears that the king never approved the abandonment of the Adansi hills. He wished to make the fight there, but was overruled by his captains and fetishmen, having no experience of war. They answered to him with their heads for the defeat of the white man, and pointed out that if the fight came off so near the frontier, the defeated would probably escape with a great part of their baggage. To these considerations, the king unwillingly gave way. The road is still unsafe between Akrofoomuh and Essiaman. A man of the 2nd W.I. lately lost his head there, as did an engineer labourer. An English engineer was wounded whilst laying the telegraph wire, and two officers with him had to retreat very hastily.

11*th*. The staff has abandoned what small hope they had of an accommodation, so, last evening, I strolled on to Quisa, whither the 42nd and Rifles moved the previous evening, and at 6.35 A.M. this morning resumed the march. Crossing the Adansi hill, I learned with poignant regret that poor Richmond was down again, with fever in its worst form. At Moynsey, Colonel Wood appeared, in the camp he was first to occupy. Breakfast at the well-remembered camp of Paratomee, served upon the rustic table I built

for Colonel Webber, when his guest. Very neat and clean are these camps, which I remember in their pristine state.

Reached Akrofoomuh, 12.45 P.M. There are some complaints about the Control service, but very, very few, throughout the expedition. Nearly all the rice boxes yield short measure, nor is it understood how the carriers, though ever so well inclined, could steal from every case. Some of them have given but 36lbs. to 40lbs. instead of 50lbs. I believe there is to be an investigation of this matter at Cape Coast. Two boxes of reserve ammunition served out to the Rifles were found to contain gun-cotton. One box of "medical comforts," labelled to hold two dozen of port wine, actually produced only three bottles. Another was filled entirely with saw-dust. But, on the whole, there appears to be less ground of complaint than in any campaign I ever saw or heard of.

Prahsu, Feb. 13th.

It now appears that Captain Glover's expedition, of which we had heard nothing for weeks, was by no means the failure supposed. He gallantly marched through the hostile country along his route, and, as long ago as the 27th ult., found himself only ten miles from Coomassie, to the north-east. It will be remembered that the Ashantees marched out twenty miles, and fought us on the 31st, and again on the 4th, a further proof, if proof was needed, how courageous are these savages. They appear to have treated their black

enemies with utter contempt. Captain Glover had several smart engagements, in which his 900 Houssas behaved with their customary pluck, and the Fantees with their usual cowardice. Of the latter he had nearly 4000. When the news of our success reached the camp, by means of prisoners, Captain Sartorius immediately selected 20 men for an escort, and pushed through to the ruined capital. He met nobody on the way or in the streets, and came up to Sir Garnet without opposition on the 12th instant. The palace had but one wall standing, and that split in every direction. In all Coomassie, as was reported, only three small houses remained uninjured. The following day, Captain Glover passed over the same ground, where his worthless mob fairly blocked the road, marching anyhow. They will proceed along the Akim road homewards, whilst Captain Glover and his doctor push on. From Cape Coast he goes immediately to the Volta to disband his army, whilst Mr. Goldsworthy takes advantage of the universal consternation to exact satisfactory terms of peace from the Awoonahs and the other fast allies of Ashantee.

Colonel Festing is in command here, and has made himself as popular as at Dunquah. The principal amusement in camp appears to be searching carriers. At the head of the bridge a guard of West Indians is stationed, who arrest and strip all Fantees before crossing. A tent full of silk and miscellaneous loot has been already recovered. There is a good story current—true also, *qui plus est*—touching Kossus and West

Indians. The road between Akrofoomuh and Essiaman being so unsafe, it has been found desirable to patrol it from either station. The advancing guards met, Kossu and West Indian—heard one another moving—challenged not at all—but mutually fired volleys. Bolting home after this, they each reported a vast army of Ashantees on the road.

Cape Coast Castle, February 22nd.

It has doubtless been felt at home, as here for a time, that the Ashantee expedition was not a perfect success, though our military operations had been thoroughly triumphant. There was another object in view, besides the punishment of a troublesome people—reasonable assurance of future peace. I am happy to say that this reproach can no longer be levelled against the campaign by its cavillers. Almost immediately after the burning of Coomassie, unexpected overtures were made by the king to Sir Garnet He sent to declare that his heart was still friendly to England, and that he desired no better than to conclude a peace on the terms originally offered. The General has, no doubt, sound reasons for keeping those terms a secret, and it is not worth while to repeat the rumours current. I only know that hostages of importance were demanded—no lesser persons than the queen mother and the heir apparent — together with a moderate indemnity. Whilst entertaining little hope of an accommodation—now that the king has lost all he fought for, and can expect no worse—the General thought t his duty

to hold fast the chance, and replied that he would wait two clear days at Foomanah. He added that the king's sincerity would not be credited unless a sum of 5000 oz. of gold was immediately forwarded by the hand of some great chief. On the night of the 16th inst., to universal surprise—not the least, I think, amongst Sir Garnet and his staff, though they preserved a decorous gravity—a flag of truce came in, preceding a chief very much excited, and a little train of carriers. The king's message was that he could not raise the guarantee at such short notice, but would make up what was wanting in a short time. Meanwhile, he sent his personal ornaments, to the weight of 1040 oz., and begged that the treaty might be sent to him for signature. It was hastily draughted and given to the messenger (as soon as the tale of weight had been verified), and a fortnight given for its return. Very curious and handsome proved to be the Ashantee regalia, which were immediately packed again for transport to England. Since these events we have heard no more, nor could we hear, for the General immediately left Foomanah, and came down to the coast by double marches, picking up on his way a Russian prince, who has come too late to observe our method of bush fighting.

Of the future there is nothing to tell. I believe Sir Garnet has no instructions to alter the existing arrangements, but he waits the arrival of Mr. Berkeley, who comes hither from Sierra Leone, and is expected to arrive about the 1st proximo Some days will then be occupied in transferring the govern-

ment and instructing the General's successor in the latest development of affairs here. The 23rd Regiment has already left in the 'Tamar.' To-morrow the 'Himalaya' takes off the Rifles and the Engineers. The 42nd leaves on Tuesday, as at present arranged. Sir Garnet's return to Cape Coast, on the 19th inst. was the greatest gala ever known on this dreary shore. We erected a triumphal arch, decked with ragged flowers. We hung out all our wealth of flags; the Castle and the fleet saluted; and the population showed its strength in numbers and lung, by jostling, screaming, perspiring, and hurrahing with an enthusiasm not to be described. So great was the excitement that a bride, just married with extraordinary pomp, was deserted by the bridegroom and all her four bridesmaids, mother, sisters, and servants—left absolutely alone in veil and orange blossoms at the breakfast table for half an hour. Then came a reception in Government House, when General and staff in their war-worn uniforms, damp and dirty from the march, had to receive the Cape Coast ladies, white, coloured, and black. I did not hear any words spoken by the deputation, but Sir Garnet smiled upon them, put them into seats, shook hands pleasantly, and after awhile they silently departed. The black ladies, however, proved the most interesting. They filed in, with snowy bands of linen across their heads, silk cloths well girt, and a profusion of golden ornaments. With many unintelligible welcomes, they took the General's hand, and each in turn, gracefully bowing with arms outstretched, went down upon her knees,

and brushed his feet with her forehead. Sir Garnet did not know how to receive this demonstration, and was evidently relieved when the last of them passed out, hysterically addressing the company. There is talk of a public dinner, but I don't think it will come off.

Feb. 26th. Never, I suppose, was loot so miscellaneous as that we brought down from Coomassie. Many times, in one or other hemisphere, has an English army sacked some barbarous capital, and carried off the treasures stored therein, but never such, I think, as those we found in the Ashantee palace. An Indian rajah has precious stones, rich furniture, an endless variety of valuable rubbish. China has silks and porcelain and works of antique art. More savage nations offer curios alone. But Ashantee loot is unique. One seeks amongst it for some cheap trifle to be valued only as a souvenir; but there is no trifle except in the precious metals. One seeks a work of art; and the solitary specimen in stock is priced at £100. Then, thinks the speculator, I will buy some of these gold nuggets, some of these savage masks, some of these barbarous ornaments, at cost price of metal. But lo! gold has gone up to £3 10*s.* the sovereign, and speculator retires dismayed from the competition. Thinks he, I must get beads or silken cloths: but here comes in the wary native, and, whilst he hesitates to risk a shilling on some ancient string of beads, that black lady in his rear has offered pounds. Unless the speculator's purse be abnormally long, he soon withdraws from a contest in which he could only hope to get something

valuable at three times its worth, or to buy what Englishmen call trash at its mere weight in gold. For the Ashantees have but one metal for ornaments, and their notion is to use it freely. And they know but one precious stone, the Aggry bead. Their silken cloths, only useful to us for counterpanes or table-cloths, are made to last three generations, handsome to the end. Their gold is either too big for ordinary purses, or, if in small bits, is run by competition to sixty shillings the sovereign weight. And their cloths have only an adequate value for those who wear things similar. Thus it happens that white man and native stare amazed at each other's bidding in such a sale. "What!" cries the former, "£5 for that dirty old rag, worn and torn and discoloured? £20 for that string of old chipped beads!" "What!" mutters the latter, "a strung nugget weighing but 1½ oz. going at £10!" And each thinks the other mad. Of course, it isn't so. The white man is snapping at a chance of getting some souvenir at the price he can afford; the black is making an excellent bargain. White and black don't understand each other, nor ever will. But each behaves reasonably enough according to the end he has in view. It is just a contradiction which must occur in the auction of Ashantee loot.

There were many hesitations before the sale was fixed to take place here. Most of the officers interested had an idea that London would give better prices; and it was too certain that all could not be present. But I feel sure that the

General's ultimate decision was a wise one. The cloths and the Aggry beads, which make such a respectable figure in our total, would have gone for less pence in England than crowns they have fetched at the Coast, and no one can suppose that the gold would possibly have realised more than it has. London will enjoy its chance when the king's regalia are sold; his bracelets, a score of them, weighing four or five pounds, pure metal; his necklaces, fetishes, nondescript articles, all of gold. To offer such things to us here was obviously absurd. No soldier's purse could afford him a keepsake worth two or three hundred pounds at the Mint. So the indemnity jewels were withdrawn, and our sale has been confined to the loot actually taken at Coomassie, or given up by officers, or retaken from Fantee carriers on the road down. A very handsome show it made when set out for view in the palaver-hall of the Castle last Sunday. This hall, where poor Sir Charles Macarthy held his last court, where Mr. Maclean, that man much maligned, held quiet councils, and gave cool orders, which kept peace along all this coast when not a soldier stood at his back—this hall has for months past borne a label at its door,—"Transport Office." It stands in the middle of the great court, which is in shape a triangle, facing the sea. A handsome double flight of steps leads to the floor below, and branches off on either side to the verandah fronting that storey. From this landing, a broad single flight leads to the grand entrance, but there is a wide door opposite opening on a spacious verandah in the rear. The apartment is very solidly

built and lofty, whitewashed all over except on the green-painted door jambs, and the frames of its eight big windows. Fifty feet by thirty, perhaps, it measures. At the upper end a small council-chamber opens from it, in which, be sure, an anxious group has whispered eagerly together, whilst the hall without was filled with affrighted chiefs, and through the windows came the sharp, faint smell of Ashantee fires.

That is all over now. Never again will defenders of Cape Coast Castle run to their posts over living bodies, packed too close to move, prostrate in utter fear. Never again will Ashantees swarm to the castle wall, and shoot the gunners in their embrasures; for all that table-load of fantastic gear is the spoil of invincible Coomassie, the glittering helmets of its king, the ornaments of his court, the fetishes in which he trusted. The accoutrements of his ancestors, the drums and horns which struck terror into the foe, perhaps the umbrellas unfurled not once nor twice against this castle itself, are there, or buried in the rubbish heap once called the palace. Fantee girls whisper and laugh, examining those trophies which to see would have been death three months ago. The sword has passed over Ashantee, the spoil has been gathered, and it remains only to divide it.

A sketch of the display on Sunday would lead me into much repetition, having to describe the sale itself. It need only be said that the long centre table was covered as thickly as it could bear with jewellery and gold. On

a side-table stood the king's plate. Against a broad screen hung swords, and cartouche belts of leopard skin, and canes with huge silver heads, and calabashes bound in gold and silver, and embossed brass pans. Beneath lay the stools, so placed that their fine silver bosses and adornments could all be seen in one glittering display. Under the tables a miscellany of odds and ends were piled. At the other end of the room cloths and silks were disposed, neatly wrapped up and labelled, one on another, hundreds of them. The prize agents, Capts. Buller and Grosvenor and Dr. Fegan, R.N., had shown considerable taste in the arrangement of their stores, but it is easy to make a fine display of things tastefully coloured. And gold is always pretty. Up to the last it was doubtful whether the heaps of beads contained any of those precious and mysterious kinds called Aggry and Popo. The Fantee interpreters and clerks assisting, unanimously declared each bead submitted to their judgment to be Birmingham, but the prize agents called the ladies of Cape Coast to their aid, and it speedily was announced that hundreds of the finest sorts would be found amongst our plunder. Great excitement followed this discovery, for an Aggry bead is to a Fantee woman, or indeed to a Cape Coast lady, what a diamond is to us. The sale opened on Monday at 10.30 A.M., with the disposal of the cloths and silks. Few officers put in an appearance, or only showed themselves to go away on learning the matter in hand. But the hall was crammed with natives, those of better class, and the ladies, standing

behind a rope stretched between the two doors. The silks, though all worn, all dirty, and many ragged, fetched fair prices. They were mostly dark of ground, with a width of chequers and stripes worked on them at intervals. Some specimens of real embroidery turned up, generally birds or monsters in needlework upon an English silk. The native loom will only spin a breadth of about four inches, each of which must be sewn together. The highest price I saw given was £6 10*s.* for a dark brown wrapper worked in long triangles of black and green and white, very dirty. A most curious piece, embroidered with strips of leather, very thin, white, and fastened only at one end, went to an officer for eighteen shillings. A robe of dark green velvet, chequered in the native loom apparently, drew £3 15*s.* from a coloured gentleman, who, when asked for the money, loudly and proudly declared that he was one of the Justices of the Peace for Anamaboo. I think this price would be about the average of the silks. A few cotton cloths next were sold, finding purchasers amongst the poorer class at back of the hall. They bid eagerly, keeping up an excited chatter which no effort of the prize agents could stop. Your Fantee cannot talk; his utterance is always a scream or whine. Amusing little scenes took place during this popular part of the entertainment. The money often proved to be not forthcoming, and that famous farce, "Lend me five shillings!" was performed at the top of their voice by half-a-dozen excited comedians at once. One droll little scene I watched. A

cotton cloth put up drew the winning bid of fifteen shillings, cheap enough too. The collecting clerk made his voice heard above the uproar, "Who bought this?" Beaming with innocence and joy, the purchaser crushes through and thrusts out his empty hand to receive the spoil. "Money?" exclaims the clerk. Amazement, perplexity, and confusion! Clerk and purchaser scream a duet for some minutes, and back the latter pushes, on borrowing bent. Comes back after five minutes with three-and-sixpence. More screaming on both sides. Sorrowful at such want of confidence, the purchaser again retires. Joy beams in his face as he returns to my sight, very hot, very much crushed, I should say, but triumphant. Shilling by shilling, over my shoulder, he counts out threepenny bits to the number of forty-eight. "I want three shillings more!" shouts the angry clerk. Impossible! The coins are reckoned again and yet again —but still they only make twelve shillings. Vastly indignant, as it appears, the purchaser makes a fourth journey back, and only after a long absence, reappears panting with the balance.

Of course the sale doesn't stop for such small fun, and we reach the gold and ornaments. First worthy of particular notice is the king's bracelet, a string of nuggets, aggry beads, charms, and nondescript articles of gold. It is bought by the doctor of the 42nd Regiment for £114. Another, much smaller, brings only £17. Then two or three skull caps or helmets are offered. One of them, black leather adorned with

thin gold plates, fetches £10, but a second, magnificently decorated with figures armed for the fight, fetches £26. Two pretty shells of thick gold, weighing eight ounces, are reasonable enough at £31 10*s*. Bracelets and nick-nacks follow, curious and valuable but ill-made, such as gold bells, gold shells, gold network, shapeless bits of gold. These run at £8 to £10 the ounce. The smallest of the masks is then put up, a hideous object, but weighing twenty-three ounces of pure gold, and not very dear therefore at £102. We have no hint as to the use of these things, four of which have been brought down. They are too small for a man to wear, and have besides no apertures for sight or breathing. The king's knife is offered, a common blade enough, but worn in a sheath heavily plated with gold, gold hilted, and carrying an appendage of nuggets and charms by four gold chains. It weighs nearly twenty ounces, knife and hilt left out, and the buyer certainly secured a curiosity at £114. A dozen small rings of gold, weighing half an ounce each, go at £5 a-piece. Then a handsome necklace appears, of gold charms and aggry beads, and scarlet feathers, which counts for £54. More golden absurdities at a killing price, and we reach the stools above spoken of. The handsomest, a beautiful piece of furniture, snow-white, delicately carved, and bound on every side with silver embossed work, cannot be called dear at £25, when the oldest and poorest fetches half that money. The most beautiful of all the stools discovered goes to England as a present to the Prince of Wales, and it will not be out of

place however magnificent its surroundings. After an ancient sword, with a handle thickly plated in gold, which the Russian prince buys at £10 10*s.*, and a war-horn of ivory, quite plain, which brings £8 to the fund, we adjourn half-an-hour for lunch.

On returning I find that the native element has vanished, and comfort reigns. Captain Buller, perched on a table, is selling plate. That fine old Queen Anne tankard which I noticed in the palace, has sold for £15, and the attention of the public is directed to another, less old, but curious, which brings £10. Other fine old bits of plate command long prices. There is a side dish of great age, mended by native goldsmiths in every part, which seems to be rather dear at £31 10*s.*, but there may be connoisseurs amongst us. A fine old coffee-pot, worn into holes by years, not use, having no handle and not much spout, produces £16 15*s.*, whilst two neat little candlesticks, not marked, and possibly of native make, go for £6 10*s.* The covered tankard, alleged to have been Sir C. Macarthy's, weighing twenty ounces odd, is bought in all innocence for £10, for there are few or none in the room that know its presence amongst our loot. Not for some hours after is inquiry made, and the purchaser knows his good fortune. The initials can with difficulty be made out, but, when the clue is given, "MacC." is apparent to all but the most sceptical, and criticism concentrates itself upon the first letter, which, indeed, may be anything. But it has always been understood that the cup, which was a fetish drinking vessel of

the king and his ancestors, bore Sir Charles's initials, and the coincidence would be strange if he possessed another tankard so old and so valuable, engraved "MacC." It has been mended at the handle. After the plate was sold, or enough of it for the day and the "gallery," interest languished amongst innumerable golden toys, not pretty, nor very curious, but inordinately dear under such competition. The girdle of the chief executioner, a belt of large silver sheaths, empty, and never meant to bear knives, fetched only £6 16*s.*, though it was one of the most extraordinary objects sold. This girdle is worn over the left shoulder of that great officer—a hideous ruffian, we saw him in Coomassie—before the king, on ordinary occasions. But when his Majesty is out of temper, or when he means war, the executioner buckles it round his waist. The king's collection of engravings, some of them very fine old prints, sold reasonably well, at from £7 10*s.* to £1. These cheaper articles were coloured lithographs of women in national dress, such as anywhere may be seen. And the first day's sale ended.

Next morning, as had been announced, the distribution of beads began, and the women of Africa mustered strongly. It did not appear to the observer that these dames could have need of more aggrys or more gold. They wore massive gold combs in their wool, rolled up to a cushion on the head, gold butterflies above the forehead, five or six gold chains about the neck, ear-rings, six aggry bracelets, anclets, rings, and

what treasures beneath the outer robe I know not. For these were great women in the land, wives and mothers of chiefs. But whether they needed more or not, more they were resolved to have, if only it could be got at that elastic price which ladies call a bargain. And there were black men, too, of the class which sports a white hat and a twopenny umbrella, but few officers. The sale began at 10.30 A.M., but before telling its accidents I must refer to yesterday, when I unaccountably omitted to describe the oddest article of our loot. This was a crowded group of figures, eight inches by two, in bronze or copper, showing the king's procession on his state progress through Coomassie. In front are armour bearers and people prostrate. Then the executioners and attendants, each portrayed with his appropriate emblem; that is, I suppose they were portrayed and appropriate, but the dirt lay so thick on this unique effort of African art that one can't speak with certainty. Then the king, borne upon heads of slaves, with his great umbrella over him. After him chiefs, under less umbrellas, and swordsmen and slaves and populace. It was indeed a most extraordinary moulding, full of spirit, and such as one cannot believe to have come from negro hands. The Russian prince bought it for £100. Let us return to the aggry beads. No one exactly knows where this jewel of West Africa was made. It is dug from the earth, somewhere in the interior, and forms part, no doubt, of sepulchral ornaments. It is of various shapes, and shows almost every combination of colour, but fashion ordains that the yellow varieties

shall be most esteemed. Endless are the patterns upon the ground colour, stripes, and spots, and rosettes, and a little device which looks like a flower. Most observers have concluded that the material is porcelain, and many believe that the pattern is produced by mosaic work. It certainly goes all through, and this peculiarity it is which drives European imitators to their wits' end. But I feel perfectly sure that the mosaic appearance is caused only by immense lapse of time, during which the bead has been exposed, without protection, to the disintegration of earthy salts. And the material is glass, if ever glass there was. In fact, the aggry bead, so famous and so valuable, is of that substance which has been called "Egyptian porcelain," and every Nile traveller has had offered him for sixpence, a dozen of the beads worth five to ten shillings apiece on the West Coast. Sufficient on this score. There are thousands of aggrys in the British Museum, and vases and "tear-bottles" in the same substance. There have been those who wrote big folios to prove that the murene vase, far-famed, was only an elaborate specimen of the aggry manufacture. Our Coomassie beads certainly sold well. The highest price given for a string numbering fifty perhaps, was £24; next, £19. 10*s*. The lowest rate I observed was £7. 7*s*. for seventeen of them. A necklace of beads and coral, which cost an officer of Russell's regiment £13. 10*s*., consisted of twenty-five large bits of coral, and twelve very large aggrys, the space between filled up with imitations. I heard that he was offered £6. 15*s*. for the aggrys alone.

Another necklace, smaller, had twenty-three beads of fine red coral, nearly an inch long each, with seventy-seven small aggry beads between. It went for £11, and the lucky buyer instantly sold his useless aggrys for nearly the amount he had just paid. The fact is, our operations were too quick and too heavy for the native dames. They had brought gold dust and scales to weigh their beads, just as they would buy them from each other. An aggry is roughly estimated at its weight in gold. Such slow proceedings were of course impossible, and those who had money and quick decision reaped a profit, I have no doubt. Some Popo beads were offered, but the best market for them is lower down, by Lagos. The Popo is also found in the earth. It is glass beyond dispute, blue in shadow, and yellow in the light. Four fine strings were bought in at £2 the ounce weight, an inadequate price, but at Cape Coast the highest bid was £1. 18*s*. A bracelet containing seven beads, with two or three chips of gold, value 5*s*. or thereabouts, subsequently sold for £3.

An hour afterwards was occupied with the sale of those quaint brass weights which Ashantees and Wassaws use for measuring gold dust. They were cast in every possible form, fishes, and dragons, and gates, and swords, and guns, and insects, and animals. But the commonest was the human figure, male or female, in every possible attitude, in every operation of life. These brought £4. 15*s*. to £3. 10*s*. a dozen. Then to the gold again, a series of twelve chains, iron and gold links, leaf-shaped, alternately, fetching five to four

guineas each. But the pockets of our officers began to be exhausted. Nearly £3000 they had paid away, an incredible sum. Already the pipes had gone at such a price as made men savage to have been absent;—the finest, of golden filagree, with bowl and mouthpiece of solid gold, at £22, and others in proportion. Those who stayed began to make bargains. The war-cap of the king, in which, if reliance be placed in Mr. Dawson and his fellow captives, he went to meet us at Adahsu, brought only £7. 10*s.* to the fund. It was made of black leather, with two thick plates in front, one gold, one silver, two goat's horns on the top, and a civet cat's tail hanging down behind. This the monarch wore when very angry, and the sight of it made a desert of the Coomassie market-place.

I have no space to tell the adventures of to-day's sale. There were more aggrys, more nick-nacks, including tongs of silver and gold, more costly rubbish, and more bargains. The great silver casket, weighing nineteen pounds some ounces, hall marked on back and front, inside and out, and on each side, with a Chubb's lock, and a beautiful case to hold it, fetched only £89, barely its value as old silver. Men had no longer the means to speculate, or were satisfied. A superb old salver, twenty inches across, was bought in at £55. Interest languished, and the attendance grew thinner and thinner till the end. But there were many handsome objects,—the royal sandals, for instance, of which we had ten

pair, all more or less embellished with gold or silver or both. Those found in the bedchamber of the king brought £25, and others less. The proceeds of the sale will certainly reach £3560, and £1000 worth has been bought in, to be sold in England. There is no further news. All the troops have now embarked, and the 23rd and Rifles are on their way home. The returning treaty is not yet due.

Packing up is the order, packing up and going away. The crowd of steamers in the roadstead thins daily. The 'Tamar' started for home on the 22nd, carrying back that unlucky regiment, the Welsh Fusiliers, who return without their goat. The creature falls a victim to the climate, regretted, I believe, by few; he had a disposition which made him more formidable than becomes a pet. The Rifles sailed in the 'Himalaya,' two days after. The 42nd lies out in the bay on board the 'Sarmatian,' whilst Colonel MacLeod, in the castle, frets to be going. They should be off to-morrow. The 'Victor Emanuel' is no longer conspicuous to our eyes in the pride of her high poop, wide ports, and snowy awnings. The 'Thames,' full of sick, leaves to-day, and the 'Nebraska' follows within forty-eight hours, as at present settled. It is a happy coincidence that the epidemic lately raging down to leeward has ceased just in time to relieve the mail vessels from quarantine here. Otherwise there must have been a great crush, for the number of sick at this moment is beyond all reasonable expectation. Many of the medical staff, with a

few combatant officers, have received orders to go by the 'Benin,' a vessel of the African Steamship Company, just sighted. The 'Liberia' is due two days hence, and she will take more. By each of these vessels are forwarded to their homes a proportion of the Kossus and Sierra Leone men. It is evident that there is the stuff of good irregular troops amongst these savages. Even the Sierra Leone men showed a good courage, when better used to the whistle of slugs, and the howling of the enemy. Lieutenant Hart reports that they carried one of the small villages in our final advance with considerable dash.

I hear upon reliable authority that Mr. Berkeley, the Governor-in-Chief of these settlements, will not come from Sierra Leone to relieve Sir Garnet. Such was the plan three days ago, but counter-orders have been received. The government of Cape Coast is going a begging just at present. Sir Garnet, declining it himself, even for three months and on his own terms, received, I believe, authority to give it to whom he pleased; but nobody will accept. Sir Archibald Alison and Colonel Greaves have both refused, and the post necessarily falls to Colonel Maxwell of the 1st West Indian regiment, who consoles himself with the knowledge that his relief has already left England. Probably, Captain Lees, who was called from Lagos to act as Colonial Secretary during the war, will ultimately get this unenviable berth. And no appointment would be so popular in Cape Coast.

On board the 'Benin,' March 27th.

A fine ship is the 'Benin,' handsome to look at, A1, 1869, excellently commanded by a courteous and vigilant captain. But, I regret to say, though very pretty, she is "not a good one to go." She has mysterious ailments, which defy diagnosis. Somewhile she glides along at ten knots the hour, and somewhile she plunges doggedly at half the speed, whilst captain upbraids the engineer, and engineer gives up the problem. When rough weather comes, she developes an abnormal kick behind, which puzzles crew and frightens passengers. Within the last five days she has crowned all her vagaries by suddenly exhibiting water in the engine-room, not a cooling damp, nor such a gentle dripping as might sooth an imaginative fireman with thoughts of some bubbling brook "which softly to the woods all night singeth a quiet tune." No! the food, or rather drink, offered our fireman's fancy, is just a flood knee deep, which pumping by day and night will barely keep under. Another foot depth will put out the fires, and, the weight of water already gives her a heavy list to port. But, though a lady, she keeps a secret well. The whereabouts of our leak, if leak it be, baffles scientific investigation, nor does the amateur ingenuity of passengers succeed in discovering it. We can but stare at the pumping crew and hope things will get no worse.

In another department appertaining to a good ship, we have no hope, but neither have we fear. The worst has already befallen. The African Steamship Company best knows what

qualifications are most useful in its pursers, and experience may have satisfied the directors that their interest is well served when officers consult how best to draw the attention of the War Office to the vessel's management. It may be found beneficial to passengers' health, and generally pleasant for them, to paint and scrape the vessel, and to rub the saloon mouldings with turpentine during the voyage. Closets which won't work perhaps turn out profitable; and it is evidently well for the health of passengers that the supply of wines and spirits, when exhausted, should not be replenished, however ample the opportunity; yet one might observe in regard to this point, that a true kindness would commend wholesome liquor in the first instance, though in short quantity. But surely no good purpose can be served by limiting the supply of candles, so that we in the saloon have to sit under light of smoky lanterns from the fo'k's'le. And yet, it may be urged, that the incident gave a fellow passenger, the correspondent of the 'Graphic,' the *motif* for a satirical sketch, representing our forlorn company in Rembrandtesque *chiaroscuro*. He entitled it, "Returning in the light of Victory." But, on the other hand, I am informed that the African Steam Ship Company is not among the most profitable of enterprises. Would it not be well to re-examine the system?

For manner no excuse is asked, nor, probably, would it be credited there was need thereof—but for the deficiency of stores an excuse is patent, palpable, and pointless. The

'Benin' had no reason to expect so many passengers; in fact, on application to the authorities, the purser was informed that he would have none allotted him. Afterwards, twenty or more came aboard. Had the scarcity commenced between Cape Coast and Sierra Leone, or even between that port and Teneriffe, this fact might seriously have been pleaded. But our dearth reached its climax beyond Madeira, where every possible requisite is procurable from the Company's own agents But enough of this. I only wish to point out how the experience of the 'Ambriz' has profited the African S.S. Company.

P.S.—In writing the above I thought them the very last lines on that page of my wandering life which has been given to the Ashantee expedition. But one final word must be added. It might have been hoped that he who told the story of the 'Cambrian's' voyage—the which, I trust, some of my readers will recollect—would be evermore free of the Atlantic, on this route at least. But our peril in the 'Benin' was scarcely less. Had we met rough weather in the Channel, the vessel—well, we didn't meet rough weather! The leak gained visibly, and the list to port increased. We had just time to reach the Mersey, before the water rose and put out our fires. After this, direst and last calamity to a steamer, nothing could be done but to lie like a log and wait for a tug-boat, chaffed by spruce vessels outward bound, and roared at by flats. Had this accident happened at sea, my book had

never been written, mayhap. We bade adieu to the 'Benin' and her pleasant Captain, about 10.30 P.M., when crowds of labourers were coming aboard to unload her by torchlight, lest she sank where she lay. And thus the voyage ended.

APPENDIX.

GUIDE,

FOR STRANGERS TRAVELLING

TO

COOMASSIE,

THE CAPITAL CITY

OF

ASHANTEE.*

ESTIMATED measures of Roads from Anamaboe to River Prah, and from River Prah to Coomassie, the Capital City of Ashantee, timed and reckoned by R. J. Ghartey, a Merchant of Anamaboe on his visit to Coomassie with the Revd. William West, and Prince John Osoo Ansah, in the month of March 1862. average 3 miles an hour by walking or riding in hammock.

The names of the towns and Villages, were originally derived from stones, trees, Rivers, or any other object may be in view, or the first man who built on the spot, such as Anamaboe ; Birds stone, a name derived from the rock in the sea, near the Fort on which the Birds light.

Quansah croom, means Quansah's Village, he being the first man who owned the Village :—

Frama angee, this Village being built on an elevated ground, and always

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* I owe the acknowledgment to my printers that this document is printed in facsimile.

has the wind when blowing, it was therefore, called Frama angee, that is the wind never calm: instances [see Donnassie No. 15 Akuker-bonum-Insu No 32, Assempa-Naya No 60, and Prahsu, 61]

Having now, laid before you the distances from the coast to River Prah; and from River Prah, to Coomassie, which inform you of the Villages and towns, numbered, sixty one from Anamaboe to Prahsu, and thirty two from Prahsu to Coomassie; how are we to get an immediate communication from the protectorate boundary? which is 81 miles, from Anamaboe, and 87½ miles from Cape Coast, The only way to get the quickest communication is to set up posts or runners, for the purpose of conveying letters, and Messages at intervals, from the protectorate boundary to the coast, the intervening distance not exceeding 10 or 12 miles, from the station of one post to another, in the transposal of letters, and Messages, "prevention is better than cure," and shortest, the distance quickest the reception, and oh! should this be put to practice forthwith, letters and Messages will reach to the coast on the second day, instead of three or four days journey from Prahsu. and it will bear some resemblance of a telegraph to us.

(154 Copies were purchased before going to the Press.)

ROADS FROM THE COAST TO RIVER PRAH.

Departure from Station	Minutes from village to village	Number of Villages	Names of the Towns and Villages	Miles from Village to Village	Miles from Anamaboe to every village
12 PM	„	1	Anamaboe, Birds stone (Town)	„	„
10 to 1 „	50	2	Quansah Croom, ,c, (Quansah's village)	$2\frac{1}{2}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$
10 pst 1 „	20	3	Dardargua, ,c, (Daily market)	1	$3\frac{1}{2}$
25 „ 1 „	15	4	Sonquah Towafu, ,c, (First Company of Sonquah)	$\frac{3}{4}$	$4\frac{1}{4}$
25 to 2 „	10	5	Frama Angee, (The wind does not calm)	$\frac{1}{2}$	$4\frac{3}{4}$
5 „ 2 „	20	6	Attah croom, ,c, (Attah's village)	1	$5\frac{3}{4}$
5 pst 2 „	10	7	Quaw Chaycha croom, Quaw chaycha's village.	$\frac{1}{4}$	$6\frac{1}{4}$
20 „ 2 „	15	8	Hebill croom ,c, (Hebill's village)	$\frac{3}{4}$	7
25 to 3 „	15	9	Ahbol ,c,	$\frac{3}{4}$	$7\frac{3}{4}$
9 pst 3 „	34	10	Affi Affi ,c, (halted)	$1\frac{3}{4}$	$9\frac{1}{2}$
12 to 4 „	„	„	Affi Affi, ,c, (started)	„	„
8 pst 4 „	20	11	Bansu ,c, Formerly place of guards	1	$10\frac{1}{2}$
24 to 5 „	28	12	Borhen, ,c, (White stone)	$1\frac{1}{2}$	12
1 pst 5 „	7	13	Borhenwaah ,c, (Little Borhen)	$\frac{1}{4}$	$12\frac{1}{4}$
18 „ 5 „	17	14	Acrowful, (new village)	$\frac{3}{4}$	13
12 to 6 „	30	15	Donnassie, (town) under Donn tree, that is the first house was built under a tree by the name of Donn, therefore they called it Donnassie.	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$14\frac{1}{2}$
1 to 6 „	11	16	Karcanassie, Assie, means under, and as the first hut or house being built under a tree by the name of karcan therefore they called it Karcanassie that is under Karcantree	$\frac{1}{2}$	15
12 pst 9 „	13	17	Ahinansang ,c, (Three silk cotton trees)	$\frac{1}{2}$	$15\frac{1}{2}$
17 „ 6 „	5	18	New huts ,c. (not yet named)	$\frac{1}{4}$	$15\frac{3}{4}$

Departure from Station	Minutes from village to village	Number of Villages	Names of the Towns and Villages	Miles from Village to Village	Miles from Anamaboe to every village
24 „ 6 „	7	19	Abbrahea ,c, (enclosure)	¼	16
29 „ 6 „	5	20	Affransi ,c, (a man's name)	¼	16¼
6 to 7 „	25	21	Worratchell c. (broad streamlet,) here is a by-path leading to Cape Coast through Dunquaw, the distance from this to Dunquaw towards the Coast is about 3 miles. And from Dunquaw to Cape Coast is about 21 miles. distance from Worratchell to Cape Coast is 24 miles. 6½ longer, than to Anamaboe	1¼	17½
2nd. day					
5 to 11 A.M	„	„	Worratchell (started)	„	„
8 past 11 „	13	22	Bansu c., (Formerly place of Guards	¾	18¼
25 „ 11 „	17	23	Quaw duahgah c., Bank of a stream by the name of Quawduah	¾	19
30 „ 11 „	5	24	Fantee Yancomassie T., (under Yancom tree) this is the capital town of the Assins, the resident of chief Chibbu, ex-Wesleyan station	¼	19¼
20 to 12 „	10	25	Kataki-assie c., (under Kataki tree)	½	19¾
10 „ 12 „	10	26	Impa-assem c., (dislike quarrel)	½	20¼
10 pst 12 PM	20	27	Ahchima-Mansu c.,	1	21¼
20 „ 12 „	10	28	Edoom-Assie T. (under Edoom tree) 4 minutes walk to pass the street beautiful phisic trees railed on either side ; this Edoom tree is very useful for buildings.	½	21¾
30 „ 12 „	10	29	Sibbinsu c.,	½	22¼
25 to 1 „	5	30	Bohoom-Assie (under Bohoon tree)	¼	22½
at 1 P.M.	25	31	Kinnasu c., (on bridge)	1¼	23¾

Departure from Station	Minutes from village to village	Number of Villages	Names of the Towns and Villages	Miles from Village to Village	Miles from Anamaboe to every village
22 to 2	38	32	Akukorbanum-Insu (Fowl will drink water) This Village was built at a long distance from the streamlet, and when they found that the Ashantee Traders kept aloof from them, they removed nearest to the stream, therefore when the Ashantee Traders saw it, they said, now, Fowl will drink water, and this became its name——	2	25¾
at 2 „	22	33	Darman T., (depends upon nations) at this place you will find beautiful phisic trees formed rail, 5 minutes walk from one end of the Village to another Village, one end of the Village situated India rubber tree, formed a natural Parrasol	1	26¾
20 past 2	20	34	Wonkorsu c., on (Wonkor stream)	1	27¾
15 to 3	25	35	Attorbiassie c.	1¼	29
3 past 3	18	36	Awia-mu c., sunny place	1	30
25 to 4	32	37	Quamin Attah (a man's name)	1½	31½
at 4 P.M.	25	38	Mansu, (on town) origin Mayang Mansu, ex Wesleyan station, formerly chief market, place for slavery, Gold, Ivories &c. &c. 5 minutes walk, before you reach, this, you will find a main road leading to the coasts of Tumtum, Lagoo, Munford, Appam, & Winnebah, through Essicoomah the district of chief Ammoah, Acquah, and through Ajimacoo, Aikoonfi and Gomoah, the districts of King Hammah, Ackinney, and Ogoan Ahkong. Mansu, situated between streamlets.	1¼	32¾
3rd day at 6 A.M.	„	„	Mansu started	„	„

Departure from Station	Minutes from village to village	Number of Villages	Names of the Towns and Villages	Miles from Village to Village	Miles from Anamaboe to every village
20 past 6	20	39	Adda, Worrah c., [the name of the founder] about 3 minutes walk, you will find a beautiful streamlet.	1	33¾
27 to 7	13	40	Ingelasu c., (on Ingela stream)	¾	34½
2 „ 7	25	41	A new Village not yet named the builder of this place by the name of Appay Enkuang, that is a lover of life	1¼	35¾
7 past 7	9	42	Dadiasu, c. (on Iron)	½	36¼
12 to 8	41	43	Dawoomakol c., one Dawooma tree	2	38¼
18 past 8	30	44	Acrowfoo mu, c., in a new Village about 5 minutes walk, you will find a nice brook	1½	39¾
10 to 9	32	45	Ahinna, Bilmu T., (in silk cotton trees) halted. started at 11 A.M.	1½	41¼
6 „ 12 „	54	46	Sutah, Named after the Sutah in Ashantee	2¾	44
12 pst 12 P.M	18	47	Quatwah T,	1	45
20 to 1 „	28	48	Bansu, formerly, (place of Guards)	1½	46½
5 „ 1 „	15	49	Eddubia, Assie c., named after a town in Ashantee under Eddubia tree	¾	47¼
30 past 1	35	50	Ahtoh Insu c.,	1¾	49
30 „ 2 „	60	51	Faysoo T., (a man's name) about 3 minutes walk to Fayso waah, at this, place the field Marshal Essiamoah Quantah encamped in the Year 1853 and in this place Capt: Brownuel was detained by Essiamoah Quantah the field Marshal & general of the King of Ashantee. there is a stream between Faysoo, and Faysowaah	3	52
4th day 15 to 6 A.M	„	„	Faysoo, started	„	„

ROADS FROM THE COAST TO RIVER PRAH.

Departure from Station	Minutes from village to village	Number of Villages	Names of the Towns and Villages	Miles from Village to Village	Miles from Anamaboe to every village
23 to 8 AM	112	52	Assin Yancom-assie, t, The former Yancom assie, No 24, is Fantee Yancom assie, and was given to Assins when they came to the protection of Fantees.	5½	57½
28 to 9 „	55	53	Amponsie Quantah ; c, (Quantah, means by-paths, Amponsie is a man's name, that is Amponsie's by-paths at this place you will find a main road leading to Accra through Sarbang the capital town of Aggoonah the residence of king Yow-Dodoo.	2¾	60¼
22 pst 9 „	50	54	Engooah, c,	2½	62¾
5 to 10 „	33	55	Ahcomfudie t, (name of a company) halted	1¾	64½
5 „ 12 „			Ahcomfudie , t, (started)		
25 „ 1 „	40	56	Induasu c, (on trees) between this and the next croom you will find stream water about a mile walk.	2	66½
20 „ 2 „	65	57	Barraco, ,t, (aman's name)	3¼	69¾
8 pst 2 „	18	58	Barrasia Ahkong, ,c, (a man's name)	2	71¾
20 „ 3 „	62	59	Dansamsu ,t, (on stream Dansam.)	3	74¾
25 „ 4 „	65	60	Assempah-Naya, [good palavar is the best] upon a dispute in the former village with some Ashantee Traders the King of Ashantee's grand oath was mentioned and for fear of His Majesty the Ashantee Traders never made a stay when passing to the coast, to this the Inhabitants were compelled to quit their former village and set up another, because the absence of the traders is a loss to them, which, when the Ashantee Traders saw it they put up with them and said, Assempah-Naya and this became its name	3¼	78

ROADS FROM THE COAST TO RIVER PRAH.

Departure from Station	Minutes from village to village	Number of Villages	Names of the Towns and Villages	Miles from Village to Village	Miles from Anamaboe to every village
25 „ 5 „	60	61	River Prah, this river is the boundary between Ashantee and the protected Terretories of the Gold Coast, the water is very low at this season, it is about 6, feet deep, it rises in the rain season about 30 feet high, it is wider than a stone cast. Roads from Fantee Yancom-assie to this river Prah is not so bad as other roads when cleaerd up, the ground is almost level, but Zigzags as an ordinary Road.	3	81
			N.B. From Cape Coast to Prahsu through Dunquaw		87½

ROADS FROM PRAHSU TO COOMASSIE.

Departure from Station	Minutes from village to village	Number of Villages	Names of the Towns and Villages	Miles from Village to Village	Miles from Anamaboe to every village
1st day					
5 to 6 AM			Prahsu, su, means (on.) the village being built on its bank, they nam'd it Prahsu, that is on Prah. this River runs to the sea of Chama, it is full of rocks.		
5 to 7 „	60		Kikiwherri (comfort yourself) one of the ruined places of the Assins From whence they were driven by the Ashantees to cross the Prah.	3	3
10 pst 8 „	75	1	Appaga c, (name of a company) this is the first village now of Ashantee Formerly Assin's	$3\frac{3}{4}$	$6\frac{3}{4}$
8 to 9 „	42	2	Attorbiassie, c. (that is under Attorbia.) name of a tree	2	$8\frac{3}{4}$
29 pst 10 „	97	3	Essiaman, ,c, derived its name from the first builder Essia by name, between this and Ansah, there is a by-path leading to Gadamwaah, upon river Brimu in Akim. the district of King Agiman (halted)	$4\frac{3}{4}$	$13\frac{1}{2}$
25 to 12 „			Essiaman (started)		
25 pst 1 PM	110	4	Ansah ,c, (the name derived from the founder) formerly the residence of Chief Gabil part of the Assins whose successor, is the Chief Inking of Mansu	$5\frac{1}{2}$	19
at 2 „			Ansah (started)		
5 pst 3 „	65		Foomusu. a running stream the sound of which through the Rocks, is heard from along distance, this stream empties itself into the Prah	$3\frac{1}{4}$	$22\frac{1}{4}$
25 to 5 „	90	5	Acrowfoo-mu, c, (a new village) It was once a celebrated Town, which was at first highly estimated to the notable travellers to Coomassie, that its population is about 1800 of Assins, but now it has been reduced to mere huts with small population since the Assins revolted. [See No. 7]	$4\frac{1}{2}$	$26\frac{3}{4}$

Departure from Station	Minutes from village to village	Number of Villages	Names of the Towns and Villages	Miles from Village to Village	Miles from Anamaboe to every village
2nd day					
at 6 AM			Acrowfoo-mu (started)		
25 pst 7 „	85	6	Ahquansraimu. c, (a place of scouts) this is the place where Assins formerly sent their scouts to spy the enemies, the villages from River Prah to this were all Assins	$4\frac{1}{4}$	31
10 pst 9 „	105		Oweeramassie Quantah (halted) (started) at 30 pst 10	$5\frac{1}{4}$	$36\frac{1}{4}$
10 to 11 „	20		Gimmahsu, a bed of stream almost dried up, but it is of very great difficulty to cross it, on account of its high banks. here is another by-path to Akim	1	$37\frac{1}{4}$
20 pst 11 „	30		Bomin, the stream below the monsi hill, 30 minutes walk bring you to the top of this hill, this is the only remarkable hill in this Road from Coast to Ashantee. full of large and lofty trees which give shade to the travellers. The Road from Prahsu to this, is very bad indeed, on account of its narrowness, but the ground is flat, not so mountaineous as Akim roads, near this hill said there is an uncommon path in which the King passes to Fantee in time of war. when he starts from Coomassie he comes as far as to Donpoassie or Fommanah, then he takes another direction leaving the hill on one side, passes through its valley but he never ascends the Hill.	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$38\frac{3}{4}$
at 1 PM	100	7	Quisah, T., this is the first town of Ashantee proper, situated near the Monsi Hill. here resides the Officers of His Majesty who take guard of	5	$43\frac{3}{4}$

Departure from Station	Minutes from village to village	Number of Villages	Names of the Towns and Villages	Miles from Village to Village	Miles from Anamaboe to every village
			this main road toward the coast, with about 5 or 6 hundred men as Soldiers between this and the first Village, Appaga.		
10 pst 1 ,,			Started from Quisah		
30 pst 1 ,,	20	8	Fommanah t, being the chief town of the district of Addansi, here resides a respectable and Influential chief of his Majesty who has limitted power to sacrafice human being for the dead, but not in crimnal cases	1	44¾
10 to 7 AM			Started from Fommanah		
5 to 8 ,,	65	9	Dompoassie T., (under Dompo tree)	3¼	48
25 to 9 ,,			Dompoassie started		
30 pst 9 ,,	55	10	Kiang-Booasu	2¾	50¾
6 ,, 10 ,,	36	11	Essang Quantah c.,	1¾	52½
20 ,, 10 ,,	14	12	Detchiasu c.,	¾	53¼
13 to 11 ,,	27	13	Ahkankuasie (under Lime tree) (Halted)	1¼	54½
10 to 1 PM			Ahkankuasie started		
10 pst 1 ,,	20	14	Adadwassie c.,	1	55½
23 ,, 1 ,,	13	15	Insarfu c., [N.B. the River Brimu in No. 3, joins to the River Prah]	¾	56¼
5 past 2 ,,	42	16	Quar Man c.,	2	58¼
28 ,, 2 ,,	23	17	Egginnassie c., [under Eggin tree] Halted	1¼	59½
At 3 P.M.			Started from Egginnassie		
15 past 3 ,,	15	18	Amoaful T., here resides another chief with his Captains only one street in this Town, Walls towards the street, beautifully worked as an ornament and washed with red Ochre, at this place there are two roads,	¾	60¼

Departure from Station	Minutes from village to village	Number of Villages	Names of the Towns and Villages	Miles from Village to Village	Miles from Anamaboe to every village
			one leading to Baquah, the residence of one of the powerful chiefs of his Majesty, not very long distance from this, it is about three miles, and another path leading to Akim		
4th day at 10 P.M.			Amoaful started		
25 to 11 AM	35	19	Jarbinbah, c. [little Jarbin]	$1\frac{3}{4}$	62
7 pst 11 ,,	32	20	Ashantee Mansu, c., (Ashantee Town) from this the capital was removed to Coomassie.	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$63\frac{1}{2}$
20 ,, 11 ,,	13	21	Esumgah, c.,	$\frac{3}{4}$	$64\frac{1}{4}$
25 to 12 ,,	15	22	Bipposu c., (on Hill)	$\frac{3}{4}$	65
23 pst 12 PM	48		Cocofu Quantah. Cocofu is one of the Royal Towns of Ashantee	$2\frac{1}{2}$	$67\frac{1}{2}$
23 to 1 ,,	14	23	Agimmamu c., (place of business)	$\frac{3}{4}$	$68\frac{1}{4}$
At ,, 1 ,,	23	24	Edunkoo c. a celebrated place where king of Denkirah lost his army	1	$69\frac{1}{4}$
10 past 1 ,,	10	25	Sackrakah c.,	$\frac{1}{2}$	$69\frac{3}{4}$
30 past 1 ,,	20	26	Adwabin T.,	1	$70\frac{3}{4}$
20 ,, 6 ,,			Started from Adwabin		
20 to 8 ,,	80	27	Day-Day-Siwah c.,	4	$74\frac{3}{4}$
7 past 8 ,,	27	28	Ordasu, c., a few minutes before you reach this, you will find a stream Orda. "this Orda runs to the river Offing in Denkirah"	$1\frac{1}{4}$	76
25 past 8 ,,	18	29	Essiagu c.,	1	77
22 to 9 ,,	13	30	Ahkankuasie c.,	$\frac{3}{4}$	$77\frac{3}{4}$
22 past 9 ,,	44	31	Karsi Halted, c., started at 15 to 1 P.M.	$2\frac{1}{4}$	80
15 to 2	60	32	Coomassie, [under a tree, name of Coom,] Here resides the monach	3	83

Departure from Station	Minutes from village to village	Number of Villages	Names of the Towns and Villages	Miles from Village to Village	Miles from Anamaboe to every village
			Quacoe Duah; it is situated an elevated ground, surrounded by a stream by the name of Subin, had this been a River Coomassie would have been an Island (this Subin runs to the stream Orda)		
			The Wesleyan preaching place here is adjoined to the Mission House; in the premises there are beautiful orange and monkey bread trees. sometimes an offensive smell, or nuisance from the ditch where human victims are deposited comes to the Mission House by the breeze, when passing in the market near this ditch nostrils must be stopped to prevent the disagreeable smelling: The Ther-mometer here about 72 degrees in the morning, and 90 degrees at noon; The atmosphere, dry and healthy.		
			N.B. From Cape Coast to Coomassie average.		170½

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THE END.

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